Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-THREE • NUMBER ONE • JANUARY 1987

Another "Low Dishonest Decade" on the Left

Peter Collier and David Horowitz

Poland's Jewish Ghosts

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Who Speaks for American Blacks?

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How "La Prensa" Was Silenced

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Wagner as Anti-Semite

Samuel Lipman

The Rise & Fall of Roman Polanski

Tod Lindberg

Books in Review: Edward Alexander/Melville J. Ulmer/ David Singer/William McGurn /Terry Teachout

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Letters from Readers

Sandinista Anti-Semitism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Readers of "Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists" by Joshua Muravchik, Susan Alberts, and Antony Korenstein [September 1986] are likely to be misled in at least three respects by its reference to two articles in the October 1984 issue of *Moment*.

First: one would not know from the authors that the issue of *Moment* they cite contained not two but three articles on Nicaragua and the Jews. The article that was omitted from their citation was by Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of the Latin American Affairs Department of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the most vigorous proponent of the view that the Sandinistas do, indeed, persecute Nicaragua's Jews. (Or did, there being none left in Nicaragua to persecute.) It was this position Rabbi Rosenthal argued in our pages, which are often open to the presentation of opposing views. His article took specific exception to the article by Cynthia J. Arnson that your authors so roundly condemn. I am surprised they did not refer to it, as Rabbi Rosenthal's article shows that as long as two years ago, the substance of their critique of the Sandinistas—and, for that matter, of Cynthia Arnson—was already available.

Second: Muravchik *et al.* accuse Miss Arnson of selective quotation and, thereby, of intentional distortion. Is it really necessary to impute base motives to those with whom we differ on complex matters of public policy? After all, Muravchik *et al.* are vulnerable to the very same accusation. They pillory Miss Arnson for allegedly misquoting Ambassador Anthony Quainton. In their words, Miss Arnson "quoted Ambassador Quainton's cabled doubts that the Sandinistas 'have persecuted the Jews solely because of their religion'—but she omitted the word 'solely' (without indicating an ellipsis), thus altering the meaning of the passage."

I have discussed this matter with Miss Arnson, who is chagrined that the word was inadvertently dropped. But the authors (conveniently?) drop Ambassador Quainton's preliminary phrase: "The evidence fails to demonstrate that the Sandinistas have followed a policy of anti-Semitism." I leave it to your readers to decide which selective quotation involves the greater distortion. In coming to that decision, they may also wish to refer to the manner in which the authors treat Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger's position, described rather differently by Miss Arnson and by Muravchik *et al.* According to Miss Arnson, Eagleburger (in July 1983), wrote: ". . . Our embassy has not found evidence of a systematic anti-Semitic campaign by the Nicaraguan government." The authors do not dispute this quotation—nor do they cite it. Instead, they lamely note that "in the very same paragraph from which Miss Arnson quoted, [Eagleburger] went on to refer to the ADL's allegations." By this, presumably, they mean to imply that Eagleburger is on their side in the debate, not on Miss Arnson's. Selective nonquotation?

Third: the debate over American policy regarding Nicaragua is a serious debate of potentially major consequence. Why, then, do the proponents of American intervention so regularly argue against straw men rather than on the merits of their case? Muravchik *et al.* would have it that those who differ with them are "apologists" for the Sandinistas. To bolster their view, they quote from the New Jewish Agenda, from Rabbi Balfour Brickner, and, as we have seen, from one of three articles that *Moment* has devoted to the matter of Sandinista treatment of the Jews. They do not quote from Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee who alleged that "Representatives of various Central American communities [have] all strongly challenged the interpretation of Rabbi Rosenthal of the situation of Jews in Nicaragua." Nor do they quote from any of the very many entirely respectable Jewish leaders who, at least as of 1984, differed publicly with the position the ADL and Rabbi Rosenthal were espousing. It may well be that all those leaders were mistaken; that hardly makes them "apologists."

The real debate is not between apologists and opponents, much as it would simplify the argument if it were. The real debate, instead, is between those who prefer a polit-

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ical solution to the problem of Nicaragua and those who argue for a military solution. In that debate, it is entirely possible to loathe the Sandinistas, be they anti-Semitic or not, and simultaneously to believe that American policy is tragically misguided.

LEONARD FEIN
Editor, *Moment*
Boston, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While I find much to contest in the article "Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists," I will limit my remarks to some of its more egregious distortions, including its representations of my work.

1. The very title of the article misrepresents the controversy which the authors purport to illuminate. By calling all with whom they disagree "apologists" for the Sandinistas, the authors attempt to dismiss (and slur) those critical of their position, thereby concealing the sharp disagreements within the Jewish community over the issue of Sandinista anti-Semitism. Even when such disagreements (presumably by others than Sandinista "apologists") are acknowledged, the authors rely on selective quotations to distort the content and breadth of the debate. Thus, we learn that Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee became "embroiled in a dispute with Rabbi [Morton] Rosenthal [of the Anti-Defamation League] in the pages of the Jewish press" but that the "quarrel . . . seemed to be less about the facts of the case than about how to respond." In fact, the substance of the disagreement between Rabbis Tanenbaum and Rosenthal, chronicled extensively in the Long Island *Jewish World*, was over whether or not the American Jewish Committee and its affiliates in Central America concurred with the ADL's assessment of what had happened to Nicaraguan Jews (which, according to Rabbi Tanenbaum as recorded in the *Jewish World*, they did not). Rabbis Tanenbaum and Rosenthal did disagree over how to respond to the Nicaraguan issue, precisely because Rabbi Tanenbaum did not see "political anti-Israel positions" and anti-Semitism as inextricably linked.

2. The authors of the article accuse me of "doctoring" a quotation to alter the meaning of a 1983 cable from the U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua Anthony Quainton, which refutes the charge of anti-Semitism. The charge is malicious and absurd, because the omission of the word (for which I accept responsibility regardless of the source of the error) in no way changes the meaning of Quainton's report. In fact, Mr. Muravchik, Miss Alberts, and Mr. Korenstein quote selectively from press accounts of Quainton's cable in order to suppress evidence which detracts from their argument. Thus the authors report that, in the embassy's judgment, being "a member of the Jewish religion is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to result in . . . persecution" [by the Nicaraguan government], but they omit the next clause, "and the several Jews who have suffered under the Sandinistas can best be listed among the thousands of other Nicaraguans of the middle and upper classes who have been persecuted because of their political or financial positions."

3. The authors correctly report that I refused to give Mr. Muravchik the names of members of a State Department delegation, which Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams "denied" had existed. Mr. Muravchik's insistence that I name my sources is both astonishing and dishonest: astonishing because journalists know that when a U.S. official requests anonymity, those rules are respected; dishonest because, as my article in *Moment* makes clear, my source was in fact a member of the State Department delegation. Asking, therefore, for me to name the members of the delegation was the same as asking for my sources, something which I refuse, then as now, to do.

4. Finally, what is one to make of the fact that Mr. Muravchik, Miss Alberts, and Mr. Korenstein can find Nicaraguan anti-Semites only among the Sandinistas, when Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo (a committed anti-Sandinista) has slurred the Jewish people in the most vulgar way? In a Sunday homily published in *La Prensa* (which was brought to the attention of Miss Alberts prior to the publication of the COMMENTARY article), Cardinal Obando accuses the Jews of killing Christ, describing how the "heads of Israel . . . grabbed him [the Divine Son], and, pushing him out of the vineyard, they killed him by crucifying him. . . . The Jews killed the prophets, and finally the son the Heir. . . ." The ADL found reason to protest. Apparently Mr. Muravchik, Miss Alberts, and Mr. Korenstein were unmoved. Perhaps they found no objection because the statement was not uttered by someone in the Nicaraguan government?

CYNTHIA J. ARNSON
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In a rush to judgment concerning a very complex controversy within the Jewish community, the authors of an article on Sandinista anti-Semitism misrepresent the substance and the motives of a report which resulted from a delegation to Nicaragua organized by New Jewish Agenda. If the research described in the article is as selective and confused as is the authors' presentation of the New Jewish Agenda report, the readers of COMMENTARY have simply become part of a long list which the National Jewish Coalition (of the Republican party) is attempting to coax into support of the Reagan policy in Nicaragua. But are the editors of COMMENTARY the Coalition's dupes?

The authors quote the New Jewish Agenda report as saying that the delegation "searched for any evidence to support charges of anti-Semitism" but that "none were found." In fact, the delegation found anti-Semitism in Nicaragua and did condemn those instances which it did find (particularly anti-Semitism in columns in the pro-Sandinista press). The quotation lifted out of context by the authors refers specifically to Sandinista expropriation of land and other assets owned by Nicaraguan Jews. The delegation concluded that the Jews who lost their property were treated no differently from others of their economic and social position, an interpretation shared by the U.S. embassy in Managua when the actions occurred.

Another charge in the article is that the New Jewish Agenda delegation and others who have visited Nicaragua have ignored the allegations made by Nicaraguan Jews who left the country. The fact is that the delegation was fully aware of this testimony both from its hours of meeting in Miami prior to our visit and from the dissemination of these charges by the Reagan administration. Moreover, the delegation accepted that there were disturbing incidents of anti-Semi-

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tism around the time of the revolution. The delegation tried to investigate within Nicaragua the specific charges of discrimination as a matter of policy. The delegation did not accord any more credibility to Nicaraguan government spokesmen than to the views of the many anti-government business, political, human-rights, and press leaders with whom it met. These opposition spokesmen castigated the Sandinistas for their political, economic, and social policies. Yet no individual among these vigorous Sandinista opponents gave any credence whatsoever to reports of Jews being singled out for persecution.

As members of the delegation to Nicaragua, we stand by the findings of its human-rights delegation to Nicaragua, and we encourage all to read its report rather than COMMENTARY's distorted rendition of it. The report is both critical and fair and helps to clarify the debate on Nicaraguan anti-Semitism, even as the conclusions differ so vastly from those of the COMMENTARY authors.

Instead of a rush to judgment, let those who care about the future of vulnerable Jewish communities in Latin America begin to visit and learn how to prevent anti-Semitism in highly polarized and dangerous situations which abound there. For the record, the New Jewish Agenda has a strong record of promoting human rights and fighting anti-Semitism in Latin America, especially in direct work alongside the ADL in Argentina. As a matter of fact, one member of the delegation was the only non-Argentine member of the National Commission on Disappeared Persons appointed directly by Argentine President Raul Alfonsín. We do not believe in double standards, which is why we have addressed issues of anti-Semitism in various settings. There is considerable and ongoing evidence of support for anti-Semitism among government circles in Chile and Paraguay. COMMENTARY's silence on such matters is deafening.

DAVID COHEN, [RABBI] MARSHALL T. MEYER, [RABBI] GERRY SEROTTA, JAMES M. STATMAN, HECTOR TIMERMAN
New Jewish Agenda
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The article on the Sandinistas raises several serious problems. The first is a basic methodological flaw. The authors of the article condemn the positions taken by organizations and individuals on the issue of Sandinista anti-Semitism on the basis of information the authors only recently put together.

Let us assume, arguendo, that the new information substantiates their thesis. For the authors to have argued that this information should cause these organizations to reconsider their positions would have been legitimate. For them to condemn carefully researched positions by citing information that has only recently become available as though it should have been known two years ago is at best disingenuous.

Secondly, the article leaves the impression that organizations like the World Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) had not considered the information and views of the ADL seriously. To the contrary. The UAHC relied heavily on the data provided by the ADL because of the value of its extensive interviews with some of the Jews who had fled Nicaragua.

Yet the article does not do justice to the array of investigation and opinion on the other side. Not only had Rabbis Balfour Brickner, Marc Tanenbaum, and Marshall T. Meyer (certainly a distinguished cast of Jewish leaders) reached opposite conclusions, but the Washington *Post*; the New York *Times*; the U.S. embassy in Nicaragua; Rabbi Heszel Klepfisz, a Central American representative of the World Jewish Congress; Saul Sorrin, the distinguished former executive director of the Milwaukee Jewish Community Council; and an Israeli delegation which included a member of the Knesset—all these had researched this issue and reached conclusions diametrically opposed to those of the article's authors. I would point out that even more recently our own staff in discussions with Jewish leaders in surrounding countries, who had had longstanding relations with the Nicaraguan Jewish community, found a consensus that Nicaraguan Jews against whom the Sandinistas had taken action had been supporters of Somoza.

Third, the authors' own observations do not lead to their conclusion that the story of the persecution of Nicaragua's Jews "is rather a simple one." While in their article in COMMENTARY they assert the

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obvious existence of anti-Semitism, in the Prodemca report on which the article was based, they said: "In summary, our finding is that while Sandinista anti-Semitism is not motivated by traditional religious reasoning or the more radical and racist theories of the Nazis, it is anti-Semitism all the same. Jew-hatred is not a central tenet of Sandinista ideology." Certainly they have not resolved the issue of what is and what is not anti-Semitism. Similarly, were Jews singled out because they were Jews, as the authors contend at some points in the article, or, as they observe at other points, ". . . because they were middle class and this made them natural targets of Sandinista hostility"?

Fourth, the authors misrepresent the thrust of the comments by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Rabbi Schindler's comments were in response to President Reagan's assertion that Sandinista anti-Semitism served as a justification of his policy of arming the *contras*. Rabbi Schindler properly condemned this political manipulation of the anti-Semitism issue. Not only had the existence of anti-Semitism been branded as a "canard" by the many reliable sources cited, the UAHC believed that this hotly contested debate on what comprises anti-Semitism in a country with no Jews should not be the basis for deciding whether the U.S. should or should not provide military aid to the *contras*.

This accords with longstanding UAHC policy which has maintained that reducing the Central American dispute solely to the question of militarily rebuffing Soviet/Communist expansionism, as the administration does to justify arming the *contras*, is fundamentally to misperceive the nature of the Central American conflict. At stake are hundred-year-old struggles for land reform, for the right to organize, for the right of politica participation, and for political freedom. Only when the U.S. provides a persuasive alternative to Communism—i.e., a means of achieving economic and political reform in those nations—will we deter the expansion of Soviet influence. To ignore the basic nature of the dispute is to play into the hands of the Soviets and allow them to manipulate the frustration and despair of the people for their own purposes.

Finally, while reasonable people can and will disagree regarding the extent and seriousness of anti-Semitism in Nicaragua, impugning the integrity of those with whom the authors disagree has no place in honest debate. In particular, the singling out of respected individuals in our community, including Rabbi Balfour Brickner and Cynthia J. Arnson, to suggest that they have acted out of something other than the deepest commitment to the Jewish people, reflects more on the authors' own intolerance than on the character of these individuals.

Rabbi Brickner has long been a voice of prophetic conscience on the American Jewish scene whose work is dedicated to the defense of Jewish rights and interests. And no one who has worked for Jewish concerns in Washington has anything but the highest regard for Miss Arnson's integrity, her talent as a congressional staffer, and her determination to work for the values and well-being of the Jewish community. The oft-cited omission of a single word in a quotation which did not change its meaning is nothing but an effort to distract readers from the power of their argument.

Those who favor the administration's policy in Nicaragua will have to make their case on its merits, rather than on the debatable question of Sandinista anti-Semitism. And those who want to be taken seriously in the debate in the Jewish community ought not to resort to implications that their opponents are dishonest when they feel they are unable to win through argumentation.

[Rabbi] David Saperstein
Co-Director and Counsel
Religious Action Center of
Reform Judaism
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

I write to protest the vile attack Joshua Muravchik, Susan Alberts, and Antony Korenstein mount against the motives and reputations of those who disagree with their analysis of alleged governmental anti-Semitism in Nicaragua. One of those slandered by the authors is a fellow congressional staffer, Cynthia J. Arnson, a respected scholar of Central American politics whose integrity and expertise can be attested to by anyone who has worked with her. (I am staff consultant of the congressional Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus.) My only hesitation in writing in Miss Arnson's defense against the authors' unfounded and malicious accusations is the fear that the act of responding will somehow imply to your readers that the accusations have some merit worthy of debating. They do not.

The authors brand Miss Arnson an "apologist" for Sandinista anti-Semitism (and a "zealous" one, at that), and accuse her of "doctoring" texts. Both charges are inaccurate, unproved, and hence slanderous.

"Apologist" has come to mean one who condones and knowingly defends an immoral practice, in this case, Sandinista anti-Semitism. The use of this term without substantiation is McCarthyism at its lowest. Amazingly, the authors never even *attempt* to prove this charge.

In fact, far from being an apologist for Nicaragua, over the three years I have known Miss Arnson she has consistently protested the Nicaraguan government's restrictions on speech, the press, and opposition political parties, as well as its other abuses of human rights. I have personally heard her express these views firmly and eloquently to members of Congress and representatives of the Nicaraguan government as well as in public meetings.

Your readers should be aware that while Miss Arnson is a tough and effective opponent of the administration's policy of pursuing military victories rather than negotiated settlements throughout Central America, she has never been anything but tough on all parties to the conflicts there who abuse human rights or who fail to pursue negotiated settlements.

"Doctoring" means the purposeful alteration of texts or other data to mislead the reader. It is unethical behavior deserving of exile from the academic community, and the most severe charge that can be brought against a scholar. If unproved, it is reckless and potentially libelous. The authors seize on an apparently inadvertent omission of a word to try to sully Miss Arnson's reputation, but the fact that the omitted word is redundant demonstrates the depth of ill-will and ignorance behind the accusation.

Having been subjected to Miss Arnson's incessant demands for absolute accuracy in data and fairness

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in analysis when we worked together with members of Congress on reports about U.S. aid policy in El Salvador and the make-up of the military leadership of the Nicaraguan *contras*, I can tell your readers that the notion of Miss Arnson bending an interpretation or ignoring an inconvenient fact, let along actually doctoring a text, is laughable.

Miss Arnson is a rare and valued commodity on Capitol Hill, a congressional staffer who is also a respected scholar. I have seen members of Congress and administration briefers, both of whom much prefer talking to listening, shut up and take notes in meetings when Miss Arnson states the facts about a particular issue, because they know that her firsthand familiarity with Central America is unmatched, and that her academic reputation requires her to be completely accurate.

Finally, and ironically, given their topic, the authors conclude with anti-Semitic innuendo that apparently includes Miss Arnson. They claim that the story of alleged governmental anti-Semitism in Nicaragua is "unfortunately revealing as well about those in this country, including some Jews, who have denied or defended it." OK, I'll bite, given that innuendo about a person's religion is so odious. Can the authors cite just what "unfortunate" implications are "revealed" about Miss Arnson and the other Americans discussed as Jews?

I am deeply angered by the vicious personal attacks by Mr. Muravchik, Miss Alberts, and Mr. Korenstein, and disappointed that COMMENTARY has permitted a part of the important debate over the character of both the Nicaraguan government and the *contras* to be obscured by such blatant slander and unethical journalism.

CALEB ROSSITER
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Years after most of Nicaragua's small Jewish community fled that troubled country, once again we have an article about "Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists." The diligence of the authors in tracking down virtually all of the fifty victims is to be commended, but, as is often the case in discussing or reporting on Nicaragua, the authors fail to place their charges in context or to provide any perspective.

First, on the question of Sandinista anti-Semitism. The authors correctly state that the "heart of the charges" is whether "the Sandinista Front . . . conducted a campaign of harassment aimed at Nicaraguan Jews, which caused them to flee." Yet even after reading their article (and the Prodemca report on which it is based), questions remain concerning the extent to which the persecution of the Jews can be ascribed to the Sandinista government as opposed to the action of individuals or certain groups of Sandinista loyalists. For example, the synagogue bombing occurred in 1978 before the Sandinistas took power and when the coordination of activities by the FSLN hierarchy was haphazard at best. Similarly, there is little in the testimonies of the Nicaraguan Jews, as reported, to indicate that their "persecution" following the revolution was the result of a deliberate government campaign.

To be sure, even if the persecution was the result of overzealous FSLN loyalists, the FSLN hierarchy deserves criticism for not preventing or publicly condemning such actions. The hierarchy also deserves criticism for not denouncing the blatantly anti-Semitic writings in the newspaper *El Nuevo Diario*, as quoted by the authors. Yet the distinction between Sandinista government anti-Semitism and the failure to curb the actions of Sandinista activists at least should be acknowledged by authors conducting a serious study of anti-Semitism in Nicaragua.

Which brings us to the question of perspective. As unfortunately has been the case for centuries, Jews today are being killed for being Jews (most recently in Turkey), mistreated for being Jews (Ethiopia, Chile), and denied the right to practice their religion or to emigrate (Soviet Union). Given these continuing problems facing Jews throughout the world, do not the authors consider it strange that so much attention is being paid to a country where *not one* Jew was killed, where *only one* Jew was imprisoned for a limited period (and treated, according to the authors, no differently from other prisoners), and from which *all* Jews were allowed to emigrate?

Given the evidence presented, let us agree that the Jews fled Nicaragua because they were being threatened and persecuted by fellow Nicaraguans, and that the government was at best insensitive and at worst complicit in the threats and persecution. Now let us go on to address anti-Semitism where problems continue to exist. Further, let us debate the appropriate policy responses of the Jewish community to acts of anti-Semitism in foreign countries. Should it encourage the overthrow of the offending government by military means? Should the problem be addressed by advocating economic sanctions, both governmental and nongovernmental? Should the U.S. Jewish community focus its efforts on saving Jewish communities facing persecution by encouraging or facilitating emigration and not allowing the issue of anti-Semitism to serve the broader political agendas of others?

These real issues deserve the serious attention of responsible Jewish officials. Accusing one's opponents of being "Sandinista apologists" does not further the discussion.

LARRY GARBER
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The article on "Sandinista Anti-Semitism and Its Apologists" was a good review of what happened to the Jewish community of Nicaragua, necessary because of our short memories. . . .

My only minor disagreement is with the statement that "Even the Washington *Jewish Week* dismissed the story of persecution as emanating from the testimony of only two refugees." Under the former editor and the former editor of the editorial page of the Washington *Jewish Week*, the euphemistically named New Jewish Agenda found an ideological partner. This is the paper that editorialized against having the U.S. move its embassy to Jerusalem. It is also the paper that brought the rescue of Ethiopian Jews to an end by releasing the news of the operation. If the authors had changed "Even" to "Of course," I would have been in complete agreement with the article.

HAROLD M. BAILIN
Rockville, Maryland

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK, SUSAN ALBERTS, and ANTONY KORENSTEIN write:

Leonard Fein expresses disdainful "surprise" that we failed to mention Rabbi Rosenthal's article in the October 1984 issue of *Moment* which "would have shown

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that as long as two years ago, the substance of their critique of the Sandinistas . . . was already available." The implication that we were pretending to raise a new issue is bizarre. The bulk of our article was devoted to retracing the debate over Sandinista anti-Semitism that began when the issue was aired by the ADL. Rabbi Rosenthal's article in *Moment* was an insignificant blip in that debate because it was nothing more than a brief recapitulation of charges that he had spelled out on behalf of the ADL more than a year earlier, which constituted the starting point for our investigations. Our article began with the words, "In May 1983, the Anti-Defamation League . . . issued a statement denouncing Sandinista Nicaragua. . . ."

Next, Mr. Fein reprimands us for "imput[ing] base motives to those with whom we differ," but he does the same to us by suggesting that we—"conveniently?"—omitted a phrase from Ambassador Quainton's cable. This, he says, makes us guilty of the same transgression—"selective quotation"—that Cynthia J. Arnson had committed. But Miss Arnson was guilty not only of two instances of selective quotation, but also of a separate instance of *misquotation*, a more egregious matter. She dropped (without indication) a critical modifier that materially altered the meaning of a sentence. Thus, were we guilty of the omission with which Mr. Fein charges us, we would still be guilty of a lesser transgression. But, hilariously enough, we made no such omission! Mr. Fein (and anyone else interested) can find the allegedly missing phrase quoted—every word of it—on the first page of our article, right-hand column, second paragraph. "Conveniently," indeed!

Nor is this the only instance where Mr. Fein reveals himself to be a very careless reader. He charges that we "do not quote from Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee." But the entire seventh paragraph of our article is devoted to the dispute on this subject between Rabbis Tanenbaum and Rosenthal, and in it we quote Rabbi Tanenbaum not once but three times.

Mr. Fein also suggests that it is we, rather than Miss Arnson, who misrepresented the views of Lawrence Eagleburger. Let's see. Miss Arnson's boss, Representative George Miller, had asked the State Department to furnish him copies of cables from Ambassador Quainton on the subject of Nicaraguan anti-Semitism. Quainton, as we explained in our article, took a rather mild view of the issue (although not quite so mild as Miss Arnson's misquotation of him made it appear). The State Department furnished the cables with a cover letter from Eagleburger, the operative paragraph of which read:

> *As the cables indicate,* our embassy has not found evidence of a systematic anti-Semitic campaign by the Nicaraguan government. That government has, however, taken a strong anti-Israel, anti-Zionist stand and maintains close ties with the PLO, *and it is a fact that the majority of Nicaraguan Jews living in the country at the time of the revolution have since felt compelled to leave. In the context of an overall deterioration of the human-rights situation . . ., the Jewish community in Nicaragua has understandably had reason to feel uneasy. For specific allegations of anti-Semitic acts, I would refer you to the Anti-Defamation League. . . .* [Emphasis added]

While not directly contradicting Quainton, Eagleburger's words seemed designed to suggest that the embassy's failure to find "evidence" of a "systematic anti-Semitic campaign" was not the last word on the subject. The embassy's ability to gather evidence might be limited (for example, by the fact that most Jews had already fled), or Sandinista anti-Semitism might exist short of a "systematic campaign." Eagleburger's invocation of the ADL makes no sense if he believed its reports to be baseless.

What Miss Arnson did was to offer Eagleburger as an example of a key Reagan administration official who, as she put it, "denied that anti-Semitism was involved in the Nicaraguan saga." As proof, she presented a quotation consisting wholly of the portion of the above text that we have not italicized. Moreover, she capitalized and punctuated it in such a way that her readers could not have known that neither of the two phrases quoted was a complete sentence, and she told them not a word about the document or the context from which it was taken.

Rather than spell all this out, we merely noted, in the course of enumerating several misrepresentations on Miss Arnson's part, that she invoked Eagleburger without mentioning his reference to the ADL. This was a shorthand way of indicating that she had not been faithful to Eagleburger's meaning. Our shorthand may have left us sounding "lame," but in fact we were guilty merely of understatement.

We are disappointed that Cynthia J. Arnson limits herself to "some of [our] more egregious distortions"; we would have liked to have heard more. By accusing us of "calling all with whom [we] disagree 'apologists,'" Miss Arnson is trying to surround herself with more company than she deserves. The word "apologists" appears only in the title of our article and once in the conclusion. There was, however, little mystery about whom we intended it to apply to. It was quite clear that we placed some of those who downplayed the issue of Sandinista anti-Semitism—notably Ambassador Quainton and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum—in a different category from those—such as Rabbi Balfour Brickner and Miss Arnson—who took up the cudgels in defense of the Sandinistas.

In the hope of making it appear that we distorted Rabbi Tanenbaum's views, Miss Arnson quotes some of what we said about him, but she fails to note that we also quoted him directly. Rabbi Tanenbaum said, we wrote, that "anti-Semitic acts" had occurred but that "the real problem with Nicaragua was one of political anti-Israel positions rather than classical theological anti-Semitism, and therefore requires a different response." We concluded with our own judgment that his dispute with Rabbi Rosenthal was "less about the facts of the case than about how to react to them."

Miss Arnson's allegation that we distorted Ambassador Quainton's cable more than she did reveals not a little chutzpah. She tries to convey the impression that we portrayed Quainton as agreeing with our interpretation, but we did nothing of the sort. We wrote: "Ironically, the most important help [that the Sandinistas got in defending themselves against charges of anti-Semitism] came from the U.S. embassy in Managua." And we quoted not one, but several phrases from Quainton's cable that cast doubt on the charges, including this one: "[T]he evidence fails to demonstrate that the Sandinistas . . . have persecuted Jews solely because of their religion." Then we

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observed: "[D]espite the fact that he seemed to deny the gravamen of the accusations of anti-Semitism, Ambassador Quainton's conclusion contained a note of ambiguity, acknowledging as it did that Jewishness could indeed have constituted one contributing factor among several that led to the persecution of Nicaragua's Jews."

But what Miss Arnson did in quoting this phrase from Quainton in her *Moment* article was to drop the word "solely" without giving any indication that something had been omitted. This effectively eliminated the note of ambiguity to which we referred. We do not see how any disinterested reader (we exempt Caleb Rossiter and Rabbi Saperstein from this category) could agree with Miss Arnson that this change does not alter Ambassador Quainton's meaning.

Miss Arnson's discussion of this issue in her letter is also revealing of her methodology. She says she "accept[s] responsibility" for this elision, but immediately adds the mystifying qualifier, "regardless of the source of the error," thereby suggesting that she was not in fact responsible. But she was the source of the error. In (mis)quoting Quainton, she cited the Los Angeles *Times*, but the *Times* story quoted Quainton correctly.

Once again she uses words slyly to imply things she knows are false when she charges that we "quote selectively from press accounts of Quainton's cable in order to suppress evidence." We have already refuted the charge that we misrepresented Quainton, but we focus now on Miss Arnson's use of the term, "press accounts," which is designed to suggest a certain flimsiness in our presentation, since everyone knows that "press accounts" are sometimes unreliable or misleading. In fact, we quoted not "accounts" of the Quainton cable, but the text of the cable itself, as reported in the press. If this text had been misreported, Miss Arnson would have known it, and would have said so, since she had copies of the original cable even before it hit print.

Let us see, too, who is being "dishonest" on the matter of the mysterious "delegation" from the State Department's Bureau of Human Rights that Miss Arnson claimed had visited Nicaragua in 1983 and concluded that the charges of Sandinista anti-Semitism were baseless. Elliott Abrams, who then headed that bureau, denies that any such delegation existed, and a handful of others who served in the bureau at the time, with whom we were able to check, concur. Joshua Muravchik did not ask Miss Arnson to name *her sources*, as, with characteristic obfuscation, she claims in one sentence, but to name *the members of the delegation*, as she concedes in her following sentence. Her argument that the one is tantamount to the other is sheer nonsense. Naming the members of the delegation would have made it possible to resolve the contradiction between her and Abrams, but it would have in no

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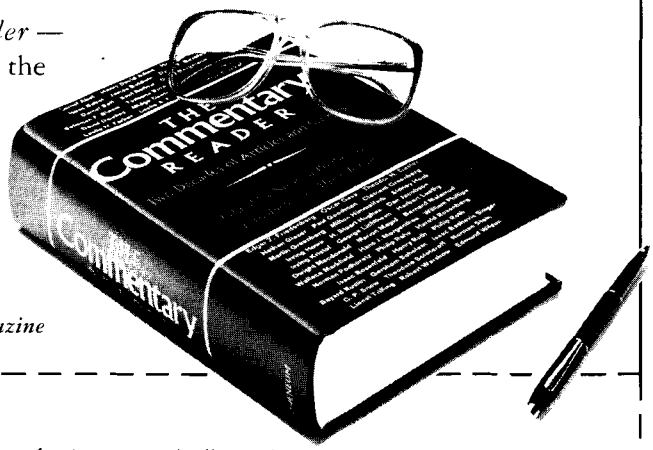

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way enhanced the risk that the identity of her source would have become known to his superiors at State. *They*, after all, already knew, or had a record, of, the names of the delegation's members —if indeed such a delegation ever existed.

Miss Arnson's implication that we are indifferent to anti-Semitism except when committed by the Sandinistas is contemptible. The difference between the anti-Semitic utterances of Cardinal Obando and those of the Sandinistas (aside from the fact that theirs were accompanied by threats and violent deeds) is that no one has rushed forward to defend or deny or rationalize his reprehensible statements in the manner that Miss Arnson *et al.* did those of the Sandinistas.

THE five members of the New Jewish Agenda delegation to Nicaragua who write accuse us of quoting them out of context, but it is they, not we, who misrepresent their report. Indeed they do so flamboyantly. It is true that the phrase we quoted denying they had found evidence of anti-Semitism came from the section of their report dealing with expropriations, but it was worded in such a way as to suggest that it was intended as a general exoneration. Even if that particular sentence were not so intended, their report said over and again that they found the Sandinistas innocent of anti-Semitism on all counts. Although they now claim that they "found anti-Semitism in Nicaragua and did condemn ... it ... particularly ... in the pro-Sandinista press," their report stated: "[W]e are convinced that available facts concerning the expropriations, the synagogue, *and the press* do not support charges of anti-Semitism" (emphasis added). They went on to say, after considering a fourth and final category of allegations: "In summary, our investigation fails to support allegations of anti-Semitism on the part of the Sandinista government." And their report concluded: "[C]harges of Nicaraguan government anti-Semitism cannot be supported; there simply is no body of credible evidence to suggest that the Sandinista government has pursued or is currently pursuing a policy of discrimination or coercion against Jews, or that Jewish people are not welcome to live and work in Nicaragua."

Of course their delegation was "aware" of the testimony of the Jewish refugees from Nicaragua. That, we said, is what made so inexplicable the structure of their report, which divided the issue into four categories: expropriations, the synagogue incident, the press, and Israel. This artificial construction simply eliminated the main charges made by the refugees, namely, that they were subjected to a campaign of threats and harassment that impelled them to flee. And indeed, these charges were never addressed in the New Jewish Agenda report.

Just as they misrepresent the stance of their own organization, so they misrepresent the National Jewish Coalition (of which Antony Korenstein is director of research and information). The Coalition is a nonprofit organization not affiliated with any political party.

AT POINTS we have trouble figuring out what Rabbi Saperstein is trying to say in his letter, and we suspect that he does, too. The information we "only recently" put together consisted entirely of interviews with the Nicaraguan Jewish refugees. Those refugees were available to be interviewed by anyone interested for at least four years— in other words, since well before debate on this issue began.

It is not we, but Rabbi Saperstein who misrepresents "the array of investigation and opinion" that he cites. The New York *Times* and the Washington *Post*, for example, did not reach independent conclusions on this issue, but merely cited Rabbi Brickner's statements; thus what Rabbi Saperstein presents as three different sources is really only one. Moreover, Rabbi Tanenbaum's conclusions are not "diametrically opposed" to ours, but differ in nuance.

Rabbi Saperstein tries to make it appear that our report on this subject for Prodemca differed somehow from our article. But the quotation he offers from that report does not sustain his point. And if there is any ambiguity about it, that is only because he cuts the quotation short. Our next sentence said: "Nevertheless, they persecuted the Jews as Jews, with no apparent regard for the views or activities of individual Jews."

We did not in the least misrepresent Rabbi Schindler. He sent a letter to all members of the House urging them to vote against aid to the Nicaraguan resistance and referring to the charges of Sandinista anti-Semitism as "discredited canards." What Rabbi Saperstein apparently is trying to say is that Rabbi Schindler's noble purpose— blocking aid to the *contra* resistance—justifies this epithet. Rabbi Saperstein further muddies the waters by suggesting that the characterization was shared by "many reliable sources," presumably meaning all those listed in his letter. Here again it is he who is guilty of misrepresentation. In our researches we found only two people —Rabbis Schindler and Brickner —who used the term "canard" in this context (and it appears that Rabbi Schindler has since backed away from the term). And we are certain that many of the sources Rabbi Saperstein lists would not consider using it.

CALEB ROSSITER huffs and puffs but he blows nothing down. He does, however, hyperinflate Miss Arnson, whose "firsthand familiarity with Central America" is surely not "unmatched." However high Miss Arnson stands in Mr. Rossiter's esteem, her behavior toward us was more appropriate for an ideologue than a scholar. When Joshua Muravchik called to interview her, she announced after a few minutes' discussion (which included the exchange cited above about the identity of the phantom State Department delegation) that, on second thought, she would not talk to us. When asked why, Miss Arnson replied: "Because I don't want to help you with your article."

Mr. Rossiter goes Rabbi Saperstein and Miss Arnson one better when he declares that the word "solely" which Miss Arnson omitted from the phrase denying that the Sandinistas had "persecuted Jews solely because of their religion" was "redundant." Perhaps we are, as he charges, ignorant— ignorant, that is, of any logical system in which the formulations "*A* is not *B*" and "*A* is not solely *B*" are equivalent.

After castigating us for a "vile attack," "slander," "malicious accusations," and "vicious personal attacks," Mr. Rossiter concludes by calling us anti-Semites. He is out of his depth.

LARRY GARBER is the most civil and cogent of our critics, but the two essential questions he raises answer each other. Why pay "so much attention" to Nicaraguan Jewry (as

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opposed to Jewish victims in other countries), and why call people "apologists"? We agree, as we wrote, that the story of Nicaraguan Jewry is "not a very big" one. What distinguishes it from the stories of anti-Semitism in the other countries he mentions is that in those cases no body of respected leaders rushed forward to defend the offending government and cast aspersions upon their Jewish victims. And Mr. Garber himself, for all his civility, borders on apologetics when he suggests that the abuse of Nicaragua's Jews may have been the work of "overzealous FSLN loyalists" acting without authorization from above. The FSLN has always declared itself to be a disciplined, Marxist-Leninist vanguard party, and a vast amount of available evidence confirms that this is how it functions. The scenario Mr. Garber suggests is therefore preposterous, and constitutes little more than another way of deflecting blame from the Sandinistas for what they did to Nicaragua's Jews.

The Academy

To the Editor of Commentary:

In their otherwise excellent article, "The Tenured Left" [October 1986], Stephen H. Balch and Herbert I. London exaggerate the degree to which universities have supinely accepted illegal campus protest and disorder engendered by the South African divestiture issue. "On campus after campus [the protesters] have been accorded the indulgence reserved for activities whose transcendent moral status immunizes them against the ordinary quibbles of law," they write.

Not quite so. As Messrs. Balch and London should be well aware, the State University of New York, whose board I chair, had 26 individuals arrested following an anti-apartheid sit-in on April 24, 1985. Subsequently, six who did not plead guilty to trespass were brought to trial, and on the following August 16, all were found guilty by an Albany, New York police court. Of the six, two paid a $250 fine; the other four spent eight days in jail.

Other institutions have reacted similarly. In September 1986, 23 anti-apartheid demonstrators were arrested at Yale, charged with criminal trespass and disorderly conduct. And also in September, the New York *Times* reported that Johns Hopkins University arrested 15 students on divestiture-related disorderly-conduct charges.

I agree with Messrs. Balch and London that a politically biased double standard applied to members of a university community violating "those norms of reasoned discourse, or that climate of intellectual tolerance" is not acceptable. As I wrote on the New York *Times* op-ed page on June 6, 1985, "What is at risk is the danger that the university again will become a place where complex issues cannot be discussed with tolerance for others' point of view." However, I am sure that Messrs. Balch and London also agree with me that overstating one's case by ignoring contrary evidence can only weaken an important and valid argument.

Donald M. Blinken
Chairman, Board of Trustees
State University of New York
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a refugee from academe, I must concede that "The Tenured Left" by Stephen H. Balch and Herbert I. London is certainly validated by my own experience. My Marxist friends all remain in academe; they had nowhere else to go. A certain type of conservative who is strongly alienated from mainstream American society has also tended to remain, but these are not Commentary-type conservatives. The rest of us generally found the escape alternatives more congenial.

But . . . the conclusion of the article is wrong. The future of higher education does not hinge on the alleged internal crisis of American liberalism, but on the internal crisis inherent in universities as we know them.

Although academe is quite willing to evaluate the quality of thought of its freshman students, it becomes intimidated at the higher levels. A Ph.D. requires not intellect, but tenacity. The two talents most important in any professor's contribution to the school—teaching ability and general quality of thought—are never evaluated. Even in the one area that does matter, publishing, a piece of Marxist or feminist nonsense is counted as a unit of publication, no matter what its quality. Further, academe preserves our fantasy that a forty-five-year-old man must be worth significantly more than a thirty-year-old one. . . . The institution of tenure serves solely as a defense of artificially-imposed seniority.

The end result is that our universities are rudderless ships. No individual or collectivity has the power to determine what they shall be. The sole function of a college president is to huckster funds while not arousing too much antagonism from the feudal lords within.

Universities must be given some mechanism for determining what they shall be—and the responsibility that comes with it. That includes the full right to dismiss faculty for any reason at all. If a university fires faculty for the expression of views, then its institutional worth will be judged accordingly. Meanwhile, it is just possible that a faculty without the security of tenure will work a little harder to demonstrate its indispensability.

But such a change is even less likely in my lifetime than the conversion of all liberals to true understanding as defined by Commentary.

William A. Baker
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . For four solid years, American college students hear their radical social-"science" professors proclaim such things as that Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and Pol Pot were great humanitarians; that Ethiopia is the best model for Third World economic development; that the Ayatollah Khomeini is a great human-rights leader; and that the problem with American women is that there is not enough sado-masochism in their lives. They also learn of radical breakthroughs in modern medicine: that acupuncture cures cancer, for example. I have heard all of these things myself from colleagues teaching at elitist private institutions of "higher learning" during the past decade.

These anti-rational, anti-Western, and anti-democratic values and beliefs are always accompanied by ruthless suppression of dissent (this often occurs in graduate school . . .) and excruciating sanctimony.

But as a result of this grotesque and even humorous stupidity, millions of American college students are being turned into committed, dedicated conservatives. This is especially true of the smart ones, our future trend-setters and leaders. By some perverse irony (Joseph McCarthy's revenge?), giving radical professors tenure will assure that tens of millions of students will be turned into conservatives

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for the next thirty or forty years. It is time that Messrs. Balch and London recognize the elitist American academic establishment for what it is: the greatest promoter of the conservative cause and of Republicanism in the country.

DONALD ENGELS
Needham, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As someone who teaches in a sociology department in a Canadian university, I know all too well the malaise that Stephen H. Balch and Herbert I. London present in "The Tenured Left." In Canada, there is the added virtue for the Left of the anti-American origins of the country, which was founded to prevent the "American experiment" from controlling the continent. . . . Combining this traditional posture with a Marxist bias is a clear winner in the tenure battle. For sociology in Canada, the battle is nearly over, with only a few continuing the fight against the simplistic Marxist morality play, with the bad guys easily identifiable as Americans, and the good guys all those who are dominated, controlled, and maneuvered (read Canadians and the Third World) by the evil American empire.

I would only question one point that is made in the article, and that is in reference to the credibility of sociologists who would consider writing an article suggesting that Hungarian firms are less efficient than American ones. Certainly in most of the socialist world such an endeavor would not be possible. However, in Hungary it is not surprising at all. In fact, Hungarian sociologists know all too well the deficiencies of their industrial enterprises. The fact that Buroway and Lukács's article argues that a Hungarian enterprise might be more efficient than an American one is what one might expect, given the major overhaul in the structuring of industry currently under way in Hungary. However, the real issue is not simply efficiency, but the availability of goods and services and the means available to redress grievances. On this score, Hungarian goods and services leave much to be desired. The fact that such items are produced efficiently is hardly a consolation, either to the workers or to the consumers. What is lacking are independent consumer organizations outside the boundaries of the party which might lobby for more and better products and services. Given the structure of things in Hungary, all that one can do is write a letter to the editor of one or another newspaper, all under party control. . . .

The real place to do a study comparing efficiency in socialist and capitalist countries would be the Soviet Union, not Hungary. It has been clear to Hungarian planners for some time that the old ways really did not improve the standard of living. Thus . . . Hungarian managers are now going to the U.S. to take their MBA's, not to the Soviet Union.

ROBERT BLUMSTOCK
Hamilton, Ontario

STEPHEN H. BALCH and
HERBERT I. LONDON write:

Let us state at the outset our thanks for the expressions of support in these letters.

We are grateful to Donald M. Blinken for pointing out the steps that were taken at the State University of New York in prosecuting students who violate the law. He and the members of his board should be commended. But an examination of divestiture-related disorderly conduct published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reveals that in a disproportionate number of such cases charges against offending students were either dropped or never leveled at all. We certainly did not intend to ignore contrary evidence, but neither do we believe Mr. Blinken's examples challenge our general contention.

William A. Baker argues that the real problem is the unwillingness of the academy to weigh seriously the quality of scholarship and teaching. We agree. He then inveighs against the tenure system, but here he surely exaggerates, at least if he is talking about the same problem we are. It is true, of course, that guaranteed lifetime employment can quickly take the edge off a professional's skills. But the concern of our article was not the rising tide of academic mediocrity or the spread of a civil-service mentality among the professoriate, as important and disturbing as these phenomena may be. Our concern was with the significant foothold within the academy gained by proponents of conspicuously crude, ideologically bizarre, or politically extremist beliefs, and with a style of teaching more oriented toward recruitment than education. Few of the individuals holding these beliefs, or teaching in this fashion, secured their tenure by disguising who they were. Moreover, virtually all of them received tenure through decisions taken by representative faculty bodies (just as the courses and programs they championed were also approved by faculty bodies).

In short, opportunities for critical inquiry and scholarly judgment there were aplenty; they were simply missed. As a result, we do not think, as Mr. Baker does, that the problem is best attributed to inflexible rules or bureaucratic rigidity. It looks much more like the effect of that peculiar way of confusing categories and blurring distinctions which has been characteristic of liberal thought since the 1960's. Since this form of liberalism is now the dominant philosophical tendency within the academy, it seems sensible to us to continue focusing on it (and not on structures like the tenure system) as the central ingredient in any possible future change in the patterns we identified.

Donald Engels suggests that radical social science has an opposite effect to what it intends. Unfortunately he cites no evidence for this very counterintuitive position. But even granting him his unlikely contention, the state of American higher education would still be quite problematic. After all, students are in college to imbibe the deposited wisdom of Western civilization and develop their powers of discernment, not to reject or affirm attempts at proselytizing.

Robert Blumstock obviously has observed the academic Left's "morality play" at Canadian universities. We can assure him that similar Manichean dichotomies get wide exposure on many American campuses. His second comment, however, clearly misses our point. Our purpose in discussing the article "Mythologies of Work" was not to express an opinion about the efficiency of Hungarian production or the quality of Hungarian goods and services. We were not even contending that the article was necessarily wrong in its specific findings. What we did maintain was that a Hungarian academician could not be regarded as a free agent when dealing with a politically loaded question, and that the editors of the *American Sociological Review* should have realized this.

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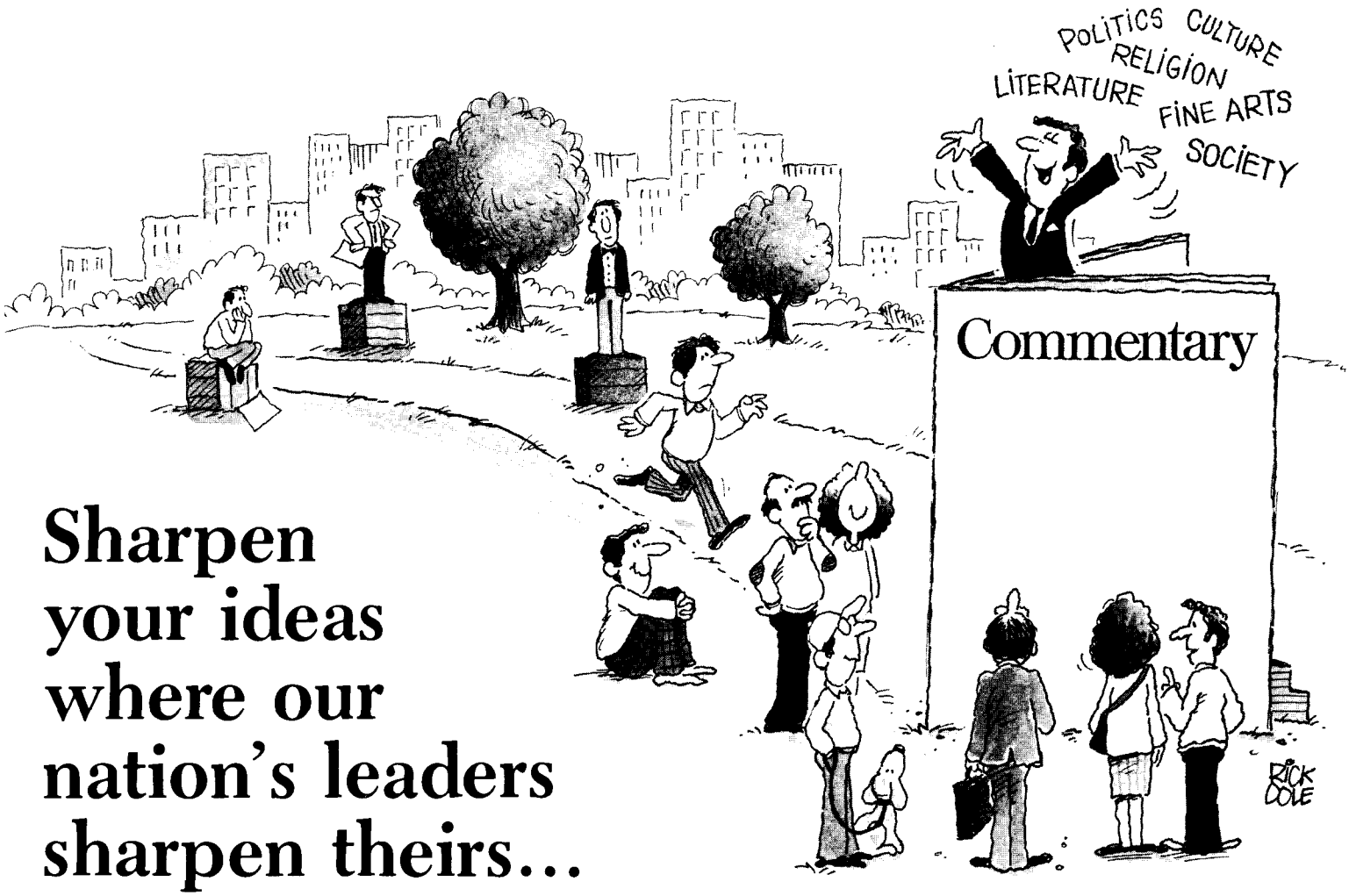

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Team B

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes's excellent article on Team B ["Team B: The Reality Behind the Myth," October 1986] conforms in all important respects to my own recollections as a Team B member. There is, however, one additional insight, fully consistent with Mr. Pipes's overall perspective, which may be of interest.

When the Carter administration came into office, I personally contacted a limited number of people in the new administration who were put in senior positions in the national-security establishment. These were men whom I knew and respected. I urged that they personally read the Team B report before passing judgment on its merits and what actions, if any, were warranted based on its conclusions. I assured them that, so far as I knew, the press leaks did not come from Team B and I noted that far from having as its purpose the embarrassment of the new administration, the study was conducted during a time when the Team had every reason to believe the next administration would in fact represent a continuance of the one which had commissioned the Team B effort. Insofar, therefore, as one read into the Team B report a criticism of past intelligence practices or of the national-security policy related thereto, this might have been read as a criticism of past administrations and not of the incoming one.

While I received polite hearings, I never had the impression that the report was in fact read by these officials, or in any event was read before the decision was made to abolish PFIAB which had been instrumental in proposing the Team B concept. Indeed, I learned later that senior officials in the Carter administration found it difficult to secure a copy of the Team B report even when they requested it.

Fortunately, the present administration, and in particular the present Director of the CIA, has in considerable measure welcomed the concept of independent competitive intelligence analyses conducted by outside experts. It is recognized that the results may not always be fully consistent with "establishment" analysis, but the liabilities inherent therein are accepted in order to achieve far greater potential benefits from the insights provided. In this regard, the Team B effort described by Richard Pipes, whatever its immediate impact, has had a long-term beneficial effect.

[Ambassador] SEYMOUR WEISS
Bethesda, Maryland

Yugoslavia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nora Beloff's article, "The Truth about Titoism" [October 1986], does not tell the truth about Yugoslavia's debt crisis. Miss Beloff claims that "the Yugoslavs have repeatedly defaulted on the conditions laid down by the IMF for their loans." Just the opposite is so. Not only have the Yugoslavs never defaulted on payments either to commercial banks or government creditors, they have abided by International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions (such as drastic currency devaluation and the imposition of real interest rates) even at the cost of considerable domestic hardship, and at the risk of domestic unrest. This would be admirable in a country with a basically capitalist outlook. But for Yugoslavia, where Marxist rhetoric is always available to exonerate default and justify noncompliance, the record is truly commendable.

Above and beyond what is required by the IMF, the Yugoslav authorities have undertaken reforms to make the economy more competitive and more market-oriented. In 1984, the foreign-investment rules were liberalized, allowing Western partners a major say in the management of their joint ventures, as well as the right to hold a practically unlimited share in them. Last year, the banking laws were overhauled to require that banks grant loans on the basis of risk analysis, and to insulate financial institutions from party and other political pressures. Finally, the authorities have begun to ease the tax burdens and bureaucratic constraints on small private businesses. The result is that already the number and scope of entrepreneurial undertakings have increased significantly.

Miss Beloff implies that the Yugoslavs are asking for and getting new credits ("it would be highly sensible to be more selective in providing fresh capital"). Here as well, the opposite is true. The Yugoslavs have recently been so cautious that they are not using to the full existing credit facilities (a substantial line of credit made available by my own country's Export Development Corporation went essentially untapped, for example). This is in sharp contrast to some other debtor nations, which are actually demanding new loans as a condition for repaying debts that have already been rescheduled.

According to Miss Beloff, "officials go on hoping that, with a little encouragement and a few extra hundred millions of dollars, a collectivist regime will become capable of operating a competitive market economy." Who are these officials? In my year and a half in Belgrade (I was an economics officer at the Canadian embassy), I encountered scores of government officials and bankers from Yugoslavia's creditor countries; none ever suggested that the debt-rescheduling program was linked to such a hope. What the creditors want is to get all their money back, in an orderly fashion and at an acceptable rate of interest. They are not seeking a radical transformation of the Yugoslav economy. As for the IMF, it is well known that the Fund's mandate is to facilitate short-term adjustment and stabilization; it does not seek to effect permanent structural change in debtor economies.

From the bulk of Miss Beloff's article, it is clear that her motives for disparaging Yugoslavia's debt-repayment performance are linked more with her distaste for Yugoslavia's system and leaders than with any serious economic or financial analysis. But those whose money is actually on the line (the IMF, the commercial banks, and the government creditors) are quite satisfied. The commercial banks have already granted Yugoslavia a multiyear rescheduling agreement, indicating a high level of confidence in the country's willingness and ability to repay its debts. In addition, the IMF has determined that its stand-by credit and conditions need no longer be the basis for the rescheduling of Yugoslavia's debt to governments.

One would hope that Miss Beloff is enough of a market capitalist not to let her personal likes and dislikes determine her judgment of what are properly considered matters of international finance. In seeing matters such as debt rescheduling through the prism of ideological struggle, she is in a way

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more Communist (or at least more Soviet) than the Yugoslavs she disparages.

ROBERT HOWSE
Toronto, Ontario

NORA BELOFF writes:

Contrary to Robert Howse's belief, I am not a capitalist. But I am a trained and experienced reporter and would not allow my views on the Yugoslav debt crisis to be distorted by the fact that, as he correctly surmises, I dislike the Yugoslav—and indeed other—Communist regimes which imprison people for their opinions, place party potentates above the law, and drive out people like myself (expelled both from the USSR and Yugoslavia) for exposing what is really happening inside their countries.

It is, however, my view, and one which I share with the wisest and most articulate of the new generation of educated Yugoslavs, that political renewal is now an essential *prerequisite* of economic reform.

Mr. Howse is wrong to say that the Yugoslavs have never defaulted on the conditions laid down by the IMF. Anyone who has read Yugoslav "letters of intent" knows they have consistently promised more than they were able to deliver. He himself recalls their commitment to impose "real rates of interest." Today, even accepting the official figures, interest rates are currently less than one-half the rate of inflation.

It is unquestionably true that the rulers have imposed "considerable domestic hardship" on their people in order to meet Yugoslavia's international obligations; had they not done so, imports would have had to be suspended and Yugoslav industry would have collapsed. What Mr. Howse should have added is that whereas ordinary people have tightened their belts, the *priviligentsia,* political leaders and those who enjoy their protection, have been loosening theirs: the runaway inflation has made the rich richer and the poor poorer.

It is also true that the Yugoslavs have not so far defaulted on loans, but this is only because Western creditors agreed to postpone repayments. The process of rescheduling, far from being a token of confidence in the system, has been the only way of avoiding the politically unpalatable alternative of declaring Yugoslavia bankrupt and seizing its assets.

Mr. Howse affirms that the Yugoslav authorities "have undertaken reforms to make the economy more competitive and more market-oriented" (indeed, I cannot see why he takes exception to my own statement that officials like himself go on hoping that the regime "will become capable of operating a competitive market economy"). The trouble is that the reforms are never put into practice. Indeed, as long as there is no effective rule of law to make sure that the edicts are obeyed, it is absurd to welcome new rules liberalizing commerce or to suppose, as Mr. Howse does, that financial institutions can really "be insulated from party and other political pressures."

A public petition (October 1986) by a group of leading Belgrade notables demanded changes in the political and legal system of Yugoslavia which would restrict the arbitrary powers of the country's political chiefs. The authorities denounced the petition as a "bourgeois" heresy and threatened stiffer repression. Yet until these principles are adopted, we "bourgeois" should learn to be a little more skeptical about Communist good intentions.

As Mr. Howse says, "a substantial line of credit" has been granted by the Canadians, as indeed it has by the other main free-enterprise countries, who call themselves "friends of Yugoslavia"—meaning friends of the regime. These were the credits to which I was referring and the existence of which Mr. Howse denies. When that money runs out, the Yugoslavs will probably ask for more; meanwhile they are negotiating fresh credits with the World Bank and with EEC institutions.

As a former economic adviser, Mr. Howse should know that the IMF, besides fulfilling its mandate "to facilitate short-term adjustment and stabilization," also acts as referee on the creditworthiness of international borrowers. Once the Yugoslav loans were rescheduled, Yugoslavia did not need IMF financing and consequently suspended the accompanying "conditionality," which, as I have shown, the Yugoslavs frequently breached. But Western public and private institutions have insisted that the IMF nonetheless continue a form of "intensive monitoring" to provide guidelines for new loans or still further postponements of old ones.

It has long been my view that the IMF, presumably under political pressure, has been as complacent as the American and Canadian embassies in Belgrade in failing to understand the nature of the Yugoslav crisis. In the summer of 1983 I wrote challenging IMF optimism. The head of the IMF's Central European Division, Duncan Ripley, replied: "Measures to enhance efficiency will continue to constitute essential elements in future IMF programs with Yugoslavia, and in this connection, we are looking carefully at the recommendations of the Krajger Stabilization Commission."

Since then, the inflation rate has reached three digits and the dinar has lost two-thirds of its value. Mr. Krajger, the chairman of the Stabilization Commission, himself has admitted that the program never really got going as the political leaders from the eight federated republics and provinces could not bring themselves "to cross the Rubicon," by which he meant that they refused to abandon their grip on the economy and to allow market criteria to replace arbitrary administrative decisions on the allocation of investments and jobs.

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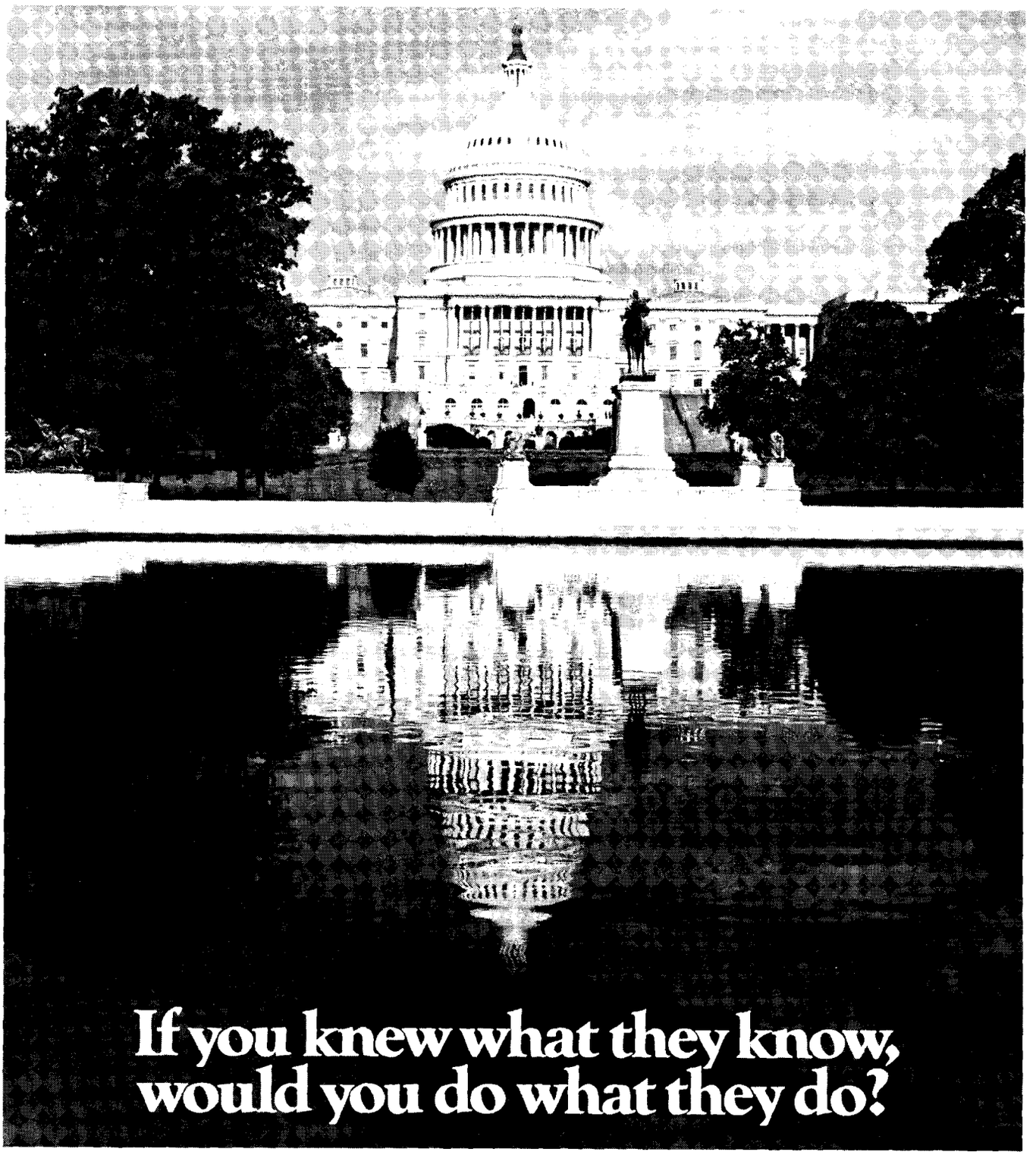

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Another "Low Dishonest Decade" on the Left

Peter Collier and David Horowitz

We first became involved with the New Left—that movement which eventually degenerated into the devious and dishonest Left of today—at the end of the 1950's, a time when McCarthyism was dying and a new radical movement was struggling to be born in demonstrations against the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The "end of ideology" had ended; Khrushchev had admitted that what a previous generation of leftists had regarded as "anti-Soviet lies" about Stalin's crimes had actually been true. What attracted us to this new political atmosphere was the opportunity to be leftists in a new way: not as the servile agents of a foreign power, but as members of an indigenous radical movement. Along with other early New Leftists, we regarded members of the Old Communist Left as figures to be scorned—people who were (in both meanings of the term) boring from within: intriguers with a discredited intrigue who always lurked on the fringes of our meetings, trying to find a group, any group, they could infiltrate.

The New Left saw itself as a movement which would design its own future—a sort of activist American-studies curriculum. The phrase "participatory democracy" captured its intention to make the promise of America real. Its first campaign—for civil rights—was based on a belief in this promise. Ultimately the Vietnam war provided the occasion for this optimism to ferment and then to sour. The speed with which the New Left became disaffected from the country and from its own early ideals, and the fact that this happened with so little resistance, suggests that the movement had a split personality from the outset—one part believing in America and the other not believing in anything. Ruminating about the instant alienation of the New Left, Paul Goodman, one of its earliest mentors, thought that its leading characteristic was a "loss of patriotic feeling." He wrote: "For the first time . . . the mention of country, community, place, has lost its power to animate. Nobody but a scoundrel even tries it."

That loss of patriotic feeling led the New Left to declare war against America, matching every escalation in Vietnam with an escalation of its own in the conflict at home. Sympathy for America's alleged victims developed into an identification with America's real enemies. By the end of the 60's participatory democracy was a language no longer spoken on the Left. The slogans changed. "Bring the boys home" became "Bring the war home." The organizations changed, too. In 1969, a year after Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)—the heart of the New Left—had converted to Marxism-Leninism, its convention broke into various factions chanting the names of Chairman Mao and Uncle Ho, dictators of China and North Vietnam who had become its household gods.

In its later, rococo phase some members of the New Left dallied with the Soviet Union, revising our earlier revisionism. (Deep in his Black Panther period, Eldridge Cleaver claimed that Stalin was "a brother off the block," while Trotsky was a "white bourgeois intellectual.") But for the most part this dalliance was nothing more than rhetorical posturing, and the Soviets remained stigmatized.

Not so the romantic revolutionaries of the Third World. SDS delegations met with the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front (NLF) in Cuba and Czechoslovakia as well as North Vietnam, and agreed to collaborate with their war effort by providing propaganda advice and orchestrating a campaign to demoralize American troops in the field and to create disorder and disruption back home. Anti-war activists with Old Left politics like Cora Weiss and guilty liberals like Reverend William Sloane Coffin went to Hanoi to second the cause. After visiting American POW's whom the Communists had tortured, they assured the world that American prisoners were being treated well. In 1969 a group of radicals, including the SDS leader Bernardine Dohrn and the prominent Castro apologist Saul Landau, traveled to Cuba where they met with Vietnamese

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officials and also launched the "Venceremos Brigades." The ostensible reason for this effort was to help with the Cuban sugar harvest. The real reason was to map out strategies for war in America, the "other" war which would ultimately defeat the United States in a way that the battlefield situation in Vietnam never could have done.

As editors of *Ramparts*, then the most widely read magazine of the New Left, we were dubious about the totalitarian enthusiasms of people like Weiss, Landau, and Dohrn. When confronted with these tendencies we argued against them. One almost amusing "struggle session" occurred when, shortly after the return of the Venceremos Brigades, members of the pro-Castro North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) came into our offices with an article. It purported to be a report on the progress of "socialist democracy" in Cuba, focusing on the recent passage of an anti-laziness law as evidence of the "people's rule" and claiming that some three million Cubans, about half the population, had actively participated in the making of this law. We asked the obvious question: if the civic involvement was this high, why was the law necessary? In the confrontation that followed, NACLA members told us that, because of our "white skin privileges," we had no right to question anything Third World revolutionaries did. In the words of one of the NACLA spokesmen, "You should do your revolutionary duty. Print the piece and shut up about it."

But while we rejected the crude propaganda of people we regarded even then as Castro's agents, we did provide a platform in 1969 for the more sophisticated apologetics of Susan Sontag, who catechized our readers on "The Right Way (For Us) to Love the Cuban Revolution." The issue of *Ramparts* in which this piece appeared accurately captured the ethos that had come to prevail in the New Left. Over the cover photograph of a wholesome six-year-old carrying a Vietcong flag were these words: "Alienation is when your country is at war and you want the other side to win."

Like most of the Movement, we presumed that a Vietcong victory would mean a peasant utopia in Southeast Asia. But we were less concerned with what happened in Vietnam than with making sure that America was defeated. A fundamental tenet of our New Leftism was that America's offenses against Vietnam were only a fraction of its larger imperial sins. We shared with most others on the Left its most implausible and destructive myth: that America had become rich and powerful not by its own efforts but by making the rest of the world impotent and poor.

To force America's global retreat had become for us the highest good and we were willing to accomplish this end, in one of the odious catch phrases of the day, "by any means necessary." Our most significant opportunity came when we developed a contact with a young man who had just quit a job as a cryptanalyst with the National Security Agency (NSA) because of his disillusionment with the Vietnam war. At the time, few people knew anything about this top-secret agency which processed some 80 percent of the intelligence the U.S. gathered. Prodding our "defector," we developed an article that described the operations of the NSA in detail and also revealed its capabilities for deciphering Soviet codes, then one of the most deeply embedded of all American intelligence secrets and one whose revelation would have profound consequences.

Although we gave scarcely a second thought to the moral implications of printing the article, we did worry about the legal risks we faced. The defense team working for Daniel Ellsberg (who was on trial for the theft of the Pentagon Papers) recommended that we talk to Charles Nesson, a Harvard professor of law and an expert on the Constitution. Nesson advised us that if we printed the article, and in particular the secret code words it contained, we would be in clear violation of the Espionage Act. But he added that in order to prosecute us, the government would have to reveal even more information about the NSA's secrets than was contained in the article itself, and for this reason it was extremely unlikely that we would ever be indicted.

We thus learned the lesson other radicals would learn: the freedoms of America could be used to subvert American freedom. We printed the article. We were not prosecuted. Instead we were rewarded with a good deal of media attention, including a front-page story in the New York *Times*. It was our biggest scoop. We had considered ourselves "better" than the Castroite hacks at NACLA and the Weatherman crazies trying to work themselves up to acts of terrorism. But like others present at the creation of the New Left who had begun the 60's asking America to be better, we had ended the decade committing acts of no-fault treason.

THE government we had sought to undermine might be unable or unwilling to punish us, but history would not be so kind. After America's defeat in Vietnam the New Left was presented with a balance sheet showing the consequences of its politics. New Left orthodoxy had scorned the idea that the war was at least partly about Soviet expansion, but soon after the American pullout, the Soviets were in Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay and had secured the rights to exploit the resources of Indochina in unmistakably imperial style. Other things we had claimed were impossible were also now happening with dizzying velocity. Far from being liberated, South Vietnam was occupied by its former "ally" in the North. Large numbers of "indigenous" revolutionaries of the NLF whom we had supported were in "political reeducation" camps set up by Hanoi or taking their chances on the open seas

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with hundreds of thousands of other Vietnamese refugees fleeing the revolution in flimsy boats. In Cambodia two million peasants were dead, slaughtered by the Communist Khmer Rouge, protégés of Hanoi and beneficiaries of the New Left's "solidarity." It was a daunting lesson: more people had been killed in three years of a Communist peace than in thirteen years of American war.

For some of us, these events were the occasion for a melancholy rethinking which ultimately led to our retirement from the Left. But for many of our former comrades, there were no second thoughts. For this group, the Communist victory in Indochina provided an opportunity to prove the mettle of their faith and to rededicate themselves to the long-term objectives of a struggle which they believed had only just begun.

Two years after the fall of Saigon, in fact, an event took place that marked the passing of the torch of revolution from one generation of the Left to another. Appalled by the ferocity of the new rulers of Indochina, Joan Baez and other former anti-war activists reentered the political arena with "An Appeal to the Conscience of Vietnam." In criticizing Hanoi and calling for an end to the repression, the signers of the "Appeal" challenged the remnants of the New Left to live up to the standards of social justice it had advocated for so many years.

Rejection of this plea was swift and decisive. A counter-ad in the New York *Times* paid for by Cora Weiss, the heiress who had come to function as a sort of bankbook for Left causes during the 1970's, was signed by a list of former anti-war notables, including figures like Dave Dellinger of *Liberation* magazine and Richard Barnet of the Institute for Policy Studies, who reaffirmed their solidarity with the Communists by subscribing to phrases such as this one: "The present government of Vietnam should be hailed for its moderation and for its extraordinary effort to achieve reconciliation among all of its peoples."

To outsiders, the appearance of these two statements might have seemed a prelude to a struggle for the soul of the Left. But as insiders we recognized that the issue had already been decided. The chastened radicals who signed the Baez "Appeal" were defeated; there was no longer any ground on the Left that they could occupy. Those who stood ready to support Communist Vietnam and, by implication, similar governments elsewhere in the Third World, had won almost by default. Their declaration was thus more than a rebuff of the attempt to hold revolutionary movements accountable for their deeds; it was a manifesto for the successors to the New Left. Sympathizing with and supporting America's enemies, only a tendency before, would become the dominant characteristic of the post-Vietnam Left.

The personality of this reconstituted Left was further adumbrated in the late 1970's by the rehabilitation of the American Communist party. Books such as Vivian Gornick's *The Romance of American Communism* and film documentaries like *Seeing Red* remembered Stalin's most servile followers as admirable old warriors who had fought the good fight and stayed the course, and who thus might be worthier models in the long struggle ahead than the New Left, which had burned itself out with its theatrics and its need for immediate gratification.

This romanticizing of Stalinist hacks was counterpointed by the return of Stalinist fronts to the American political scene. By 1979 the World Peace Council, originally created by Stalin in 1949, was once again operating on the American Left. Its American offshoot, the U.S. Peace Council, was holding conferences attended not only by what was left of the Left but also by Senators and Congressmen. The pro-Soviet sycophancy of the Communist party kept its numbers small; but the new spirit of acceptance allowed its influence to grow. Communists became stylistically influential, reintroducing the linguistic and organizational deviousness of the Popular Front period of the late 1930's that made it hard to know what words meant and harder yet to identify the allegiances of those who spoke them.

WHILE the New Left had announced its birth from a university campus, its post-Vietnam successor seemed almost to trumpet its intrinsic hypocrisy by organizing itself in New York's Riverside Church, built by John D. Rockefeller fifty years earlier as a headquarters for liberal Protestantism. Among the architects of the declaration with which the reconstituted Left was launched were William Sloane Coffin, newly appointed minister of Riverside, and his patron, the ubiquitous Cora Weiss, head of the Church's Disarmament Program.

Sloane Coffin had become a representative figure in the effort to forge an alliance between the churches and the Third World, one of those who brought the gospel of "liberation theology" and its notion of a Marxist God enjoining the faithful to establish a Communist heaven on earth by supporting revolutionary movements, defined as the "essence of Christian faith." Defending his own covenant with the dictators in Hanoi, for example, Coffin advised an interviewer that "Communism is a page torn out of the Bible" and that "the social justice that's been achieved in . . . North Vietnam [is] an achievement no Christian society on that scale has ever achieved."

While Coffin articulated the "new morality" of the post-Vietnam Left, Cora Weiss was in a sense more typical as well as far more influential than he. Drawing on a $25-million family fortune inherited from her father Sam Rubin (in his own time an old-line Communist), she had helped fund NACLA, which was continuing to promote the cause of Castro. In addition, she was the lead-

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ing backer of the Institute for Policy Studies which by the late-1970's had become the heart of a secondary system of institutional lobbies whose programs had elicited the sponsorship of more than fifty members of Congress and whose influence spread from Capitol Hill to the Carter administration itself.

As head of the Riverside Church Disarmament Program, Weiss played a leading role in the opposition to American efforts to neutralize the vast Soviet military build-up of the 70's. Her work focused on exposing the "myth" of a Soviet threat. Richard Barnet, a co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies and its resident "expert" on strategic affairs, called the idea of such a threat "the big lie of our times." In May 1979 Weiss herself described it as a "hereditary disease transmitted over the past sixty years."

Barely six months after this *aperçu* was delivered, the Soviets assassinated the head of state in Kabul and launched a massive and eventually genocidal invasion of Afghanistan. Weiss's Disarmament Program at the Riverside Church responded by declaring: "Any form of U.S. intervention, escalation of a military presence or an increase in the defense budget is unnecessary and inappropriate. . . . Russia's challenge continues to demand restraint, study, and understanding." In other words, the invasion was merely a "defensive" response to American pressure. Instead of focusing their attention on the Soviet action in Afghanistan, members of the "peace movement" should look at what the U.S. had done to "poison relations between the two superpowers."

THIS failure to oppose Soviet aggression or recognize the Soviet threat showed the distance traveled since the early days of the New Left when the malignity of the USSR was a given. It also showed how far the Soviet Union had come in rehabilitating itself since the revelations of Khrushchev, which had destroyed the orthodoxy that held party vanguards in line and controlled the popular fronts. The post-Vietnam era had become a time of new opportunities for the Soviets, an extended school at which Fidel Castro, although dependent on them for a subvention of some $10-billion a year to keep his island afloat, became their most important political teacher.

Castro saw that the American Left, still wary of the USSR, could be made to promote Soviet aims indirectly because of its ties—affective even more than political—with him, ties that would survive his support of the invasions of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and of Afghanistan a decade later. At the same time he was making Cuba's economy an appendage to the USSR's and its intelligence service and military forces instruments of the Soviet state, Castro began the creation of what amounted to a new version of the old Communist International, a new Comintern.

A revolution throughout the hemisphere had always been Castro's ambition, but through the mid-60's the cautious Soviets had been wary of what they regarded as "reckless adventurism" sure to provoke an American response. Two events changed their attitude. The first was the American defeat in Indochina and the crucial role which internal opposition had played in forcing the U.S. withdrawal. Second were changes in the American Left itself, foremost among them the establishment of a Fidelista cadre. The Soviets saw that Castro's charismatic hold over elements of the American Left was such that his adventurism might be less reckless than it had seemed earlier in his career.

Within months after the fall of Saigon, the Soviets began an unprecedented flow of arms to Cuba. By 1980 the flow had become a flood—ten times more military supplies in a single year than the total sent during the entire first decade of the revolution, when Castro presumably faced his greatest external threat. The massive arms build-up had only one purpose—to make Cuba the forward base of a new stage in Soviet expansionism. Castro played his part by dispatching 30,000 troops to anchor Soviet influence in Angola and Ethiopia.

But if Africa was the first front for the new offensive, Central America was always the ultimate prize. Castro had long been the patron of tiny guerrilla bands in Nicaragua and El Salvador whose leaders had been trained in Havana and Moscow and sometimes at PLO terrorist camps in Lebanon. Because he had survived U.S. animosity so long and studied American weaknesses so carefully, Castro better than anyone else understood the "Vietnam equation" which defined the new criteria for revolutionary success. It was not necessary for the Communists to win; it was necessary only for America to lose; and losing was defined by what went on in the domestic politics of the United States rather than on Third World battlefields.

When the Carter administration took office in January 1977, the Soviet bloc was faced with unanswered questions. How much weight could be given to the new President's expressions of regret for American interventions of the past, or his determination to avoid "another Vietnam"? How vigorously would he pursue his new human-rights policy with regional dictators like Somoza who relied on U.S. support?

Factoring the answers to these questions into the "Vietnam equation" would determine revolutionary options and risk, and there was no Communist leader in the world who had better intelligence for arriving at an answer than Fidel Castro. In creating the Venceremos Brigades in 1969, Castro had placed them under the control of Cuban intelligence with results that were revealed later in the testimony of a Cuban defector: "The Venceremos Brigades brought the first great

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quantity of information through American citizens that was obtained in the United States, because up to the moment when the brigades came into existence . . . the amount of information that we had on American citizens came from public sources, and it was confusing." In the changed political atmosphere after Vietnam, the networks which Castro's loyalists had created now permeated the American political process. The cofounder of NACLA had even been appointed to the Carter administration as a member of the team that was shaping its policy on human rights.

As Jimmy Carter took office, Castro's favorite Sandinista, Humberto Ortega, unveiled a new political strategy from his Costa Rican headquarters which bore the imprint of the master himself. An immediate Marxist revolution would be deferred in favor of a broad coalition with non-Marxist democrats whose announced goal was replacing the Somoza dictatorship with a pluralistic government. At the moment this tactic was adopted, the Sandinistas had been a minuscule force, barely 200 members and split into three antagonistic factions. But now, as part of a democratic coalition, they were able to launch a mass movement that soon challenged Somoza for power in Nicaragua.

By early 1979, when it was apparent that Somoza could not last, Castro summoned the guerrillas, still feuding among themselves, to Havana. There he created the nine-member *comandante* directorate with each of the three Sandinista factions represented. The Sandinista command unified, Castro made arrangements to provide them with the arms and military support that would allow them to defeat Somoza and, even more important, allow them also to steal the revolution from the mass movement they had ridden to success.

Once his protégés were firmly established in Managua, Castro turned his attention to El Salvador. Six months after the Sandinista victory, a new summons brought the heads of the five Salvadoran guerrilla factions to Havana where Castro persuaded them too to form a unified command. The new force that Castro created was called the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), after an agent of Stalin's old Comintern. Until then, the Salvadoran guerrillas had been too isolated and weak to open a revolutionary front. But with Castro behind them, they laid plans to move from sporadic actions to a full-scale guerrilla war. In July 1980, the chairman of the Salvadoran Communist party, Shafik Handal, a Salvadoran of Lebanese descent with strong ties to the PLO, embarked on a journey to Moscow and from there to Vietnam and other way stations in the Communist bloc. He returned with pledges of some 200 tons of arms to be shipped through Cuba with which the guerrilla forces could begin a "final offensive."

But as the "Vietnam equation" had shown, organizing the guerrilla forces was only a part, and perhaps the smallest part, of what was required. It was also necessary to assemble what Trotsky had once described as the "frontier guards" of the revolution. Since Castro was preparing to unify the Sandinista command, his American allies had to rush to set up the guerrillas' support system in the United States, using the "peace movement" as a base. Even before its founding had been officially announced, for example, the Communist-dominated U.S. Peace Council had joined forces with NACLA to stage a National Conference on Nicaragua in Washington. The purpose was to mobilize opposition against a potential U.S. "intervention" in Nicaragua. While claiming that they wanted to prevent "another Vietnam," the organizers' real purpose was precisely to achieve another Vietnam—by undermining any U.S. effort to counter the already massive Cuban investment aimed at turning Nicaragua into yet another Communist state.

The Nicaragua conference proved to be the first step in a long-term plan: the creation of an organizational shield behind which the cause of Communist revolution in the hemisphere could advance. The conference put a stamp of respectability on an organization called "The Network in Solidarity with the People of Nicaragua." Started on U.S. college campuses by two Nicaraguan nationals acting for the Sandinistas, the Nicaraguan Network soon became a national organization with chapters in hundreds of American cities and on campuses across the country. Its efforts led to a "Pledge of Resistance" signed by 70,000 Americans who declared themselves ready to undertake illegal actions to defend the Communist regime.

Acknowledging the importance of this activity, Sandinista Minister Tomás Borge declared: "The battle for Nicaragua is not being waged in Nicaragua. It is being fought in the United States." But the Nicaragua Network was only one of an array of "issue-oriented" organizations from which —in true popular-front style—the friends of violent revolutions could speak to other Americans in the language of pacifism and humanitarianism. While the Nicaragua Network lobbied against aid to the anti-Communist *contras* to prevent "another Vietnam," its movement comrades, working in allied organizations, were able to mobilize even greater support as champions of "human rights."

One of the most potent of these "human-rights" groups was the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), created by Christian "liberationists" after the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende in Chile. WOLA's director, Joe Eldridge, had been active in Chile as an Allende partisan, and WOLA's first concerns about human-rights abuses were aimed squarely at the Pinochet regime. But in 1977, when Castro and his protégés began launching their new strategy in Nicaragua, WOLA

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also shifted its attention to Nicaragua, sponsoring public-relations tours to the U.S. by the Sandinista priests Ernesto Cardenal and Miguel D'Escoto, who rallied many Catholics here, including members of the Maryknoll order, to the cause of the "hemispheric revolution" and also to the attempt to convert Christ to Marxism. Led by its Nicaragua coordinator Kay Stubbs, WOLA also stepped up its campaign against human-rights abuses of the Somoza regime and lobbied the Carter administration to withdraw its support. After the Sandinista victory, Stubbs, who all the time had been a secret member of a Sandinista cell in Washington, D.C., left WOLA to join the new Marxist regime and the organization's interest in human-rights abuses in Nicaragua all but disappeared. WOLA now began to focus on El Salvador, where its investigations into human rights were directed by a woman named Heather Foote, an American Marxist with strong political ties to the FPL faction of the guerrilla forces.

Although it had shifted its critical gaze elsewhere, WOLA's solidarity with the Sandinistas remained as strong as ever. When *contra* aid lost in the Congress in 1984, a major factor was the report entitled "Human Rights Violations by the Contras" circulated under the auspices of WOLA to Congress and the press. However, WOLA had used its reputation as an independent "human-rights" organization to provide cover for a Sandinista stratagem. The investigation had been initiated—and the investigator Reed Brody selected—by the law firm of Reichler and Applebaum, registered representative of the Managua regime. Brody's housing and transportation were supplied by the Sandinistas while he was in Nicaragua, and "witnesses" to *contra* atrocities were supplied by the security police. Before he departed with his report, Brody was provided with a photo opportunity which resulted in a snapshot showing him hugging Daniel Ortega.

THE deception practiced by organizations like WOLA in behalf of the Sandinistas is also practiced *against* the Duarte government in El Salvador. In the spring of 1980, while the Salvadoran guerrilla leader Shafik Handal was traveling to Soviet-bloc countries in search of the weapons with which to begin his final offensive, his brother Farid arrived in New York to organize political support for the FMLN war. As Farid later described it, his mission was "the creation of the International Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador." CISPES, as the American branch of this international committee would be called, was to be modeled on the Nicaragua Network and would have direct links with the guerrilla forces and with parallel "solidarity committees" which the World Peace Council had created in sixteen countries around the world.

After touching base at Cuba's UN Mission, Farid Handal went to Washington to meet supporters at the Institute for Policy Studies and WOLA. As he recorded in his journal (which was later found by authorities in Salvador in a captured guerrilla safe house), members of the Communist party in Washington, D.C. introduced him to Congressman Ron Dellums of California, who in turn arranged for him to meet with the congressional Black Caucus. Dellums provided other services. "Monday morning," Handal wrote in his journal, "the offices of Congressman Dellums were turned into our offices. Everything was done there. The meeting with the Black Caucus took place in the liver of the monster itself, nothing less than in the meeting room of the House Foreign Affairs Committee." Understanding that the opportunities laid before him would vanish if he spoke in the language of his brother Shafik, Farid noted that the guerrillas' cause "should be presented with its human features, without political language, and, most importantly, without a political label."

After Farid Handal had left the United States, CISPES was formally created by his American supporters. One of the organization's first acts was to disseminate a "dissent paper" allegedly drafted by disaffected experts at the State Department and National Security Council who believed that further military aid to El Salvador would eventually force the U.S. to intervene there militarily and who had a "consensus" in favor of the Democratic Revolutionary Front, the political arm of the FMLN guerrillas. Although the State Department denied its authenticity, the report was accepted as legitimate by several journalists, among them Anthony Lewis who wrote about it in the New York *Times*. Even after it had been established that the "dissent paper" was a forgery (there is evidence that it was one of many Soviet "active measures" planned by the KGB to create disinformation in the U.S.), CISPES continued to distribute it.

During the early 1980's, CISPES held press conferences and marched Salvadoran refugees allegedly fleeing "U.S.-sponsored terror" through Washington. The organization has also been effective in Congress. In the spring of 1985, its lobbying efforts enabled its congressional supporters on the House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs to schedule hearings on the "air war" in El Salvador. The object of the hearings was to determine whether the strikes against the guerrillas hit civilian populations in violation of congressional certification conditions, which would be a cause to cut off U.S. aid. Eyewitness testimony was presented for this claim. One witness was Gus Newport, mayor of Berkeley and also vice chairman of the Soviets' World Peace Council. Newport's observations of the Salvadoran air war were supported by a written report submitted by Carlottia Scott, chief aide to Congressman Ron Dellums (who had shaped Newport's mayoral career). Both

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Newport and Scott got their insights during a visit they had made to Berkeley's "sister city" which was located inside the guerrilla zone.

Despite its tainted origins and its deceptive politics, CISPES has been able to mobilize support on hundreds of campuses across the country. Congressmen Dellums and Mervyn Dymally of California have written fund-raising letters for the organization, while Congressmen Edward Markey and Gerry Studds of Massachusetts and others have provided endorsements and moral support. With this kind of backing CISPES has become the most influential lobby against U.S. aid to the Duarte government—not only military aid, but food, medicine, and agricultural assistance. When it is not lobbying against aid to the Duarte government, CISPES is raising money to send to the FMLN guerrillas. The strategy of CISPES, in the words of one of its internal documents, is "to challenge U.S. policy; to disrupt the war effort, to polarize opinion, to inspire people to refuse to cooperate; to create divisions within Congress and every other institution. . . . Each escalation of the war must bring a response more costly than the one before, precisely the Vietnam war phenomenon the administration is trying to avoid." One of the slogans at a recent CISPES rally expressed the intention more succinctly: "Vietnam Has Won, El Salvador Will Win."

WE FIND it hard not to be ashamed of some of the things in which we were involved in the 1960's. Yet New Left radicals had a certain candor, reveling in their outlaw status and not trying to seem something politically they were not. That is not true today. W.H. Auden once called the radical 30's a "low dishonest decade," and the 80's are turning into another "low dishonest decade" on the Left. While the 60's Left took its case to the streets, where its commitments could at least be examined, the members of today's Left, exploiting the political process and the vulnerabilities of the two-party system, posture as respectable liberals who only want to make sure that there are no more Vietnams. "Liberal," in fact, is the way the establishment media invariably describe the activities of organizations like CISPES and WOLA, and the coterie of Congressmen who consistently support Communist advances in the Third World.

Ron Dellums, whom we ourselves helped elect in 1970, is perhaps the most characteristic of these Congressmen. When his bill prescribing sanctions against South Africa was recently adopted by the House, for instance, a profile in the Washington *Post* portrayed him as "the outspoken liberal he has always been," noted that a colleague had called him a "moral force for reordering priorities," and quoted Dellums himself as asking, "If you carry controversial ideas in a controversial personality, how can you ever get anything done?"

His persona has changed somewhat from the days when he stood beside Black Panther party leaders Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver and harangued audiences with revolutionary rhetoric. When he was attacked in the early 70's as a radical, Dellums did not shrink from the charge: "I am not going to back away from being a radical," he said. "My politics are to bring the walls down." But in the 80's Dellums has changed the words if not the tune. He now speaks in the name of "peace" and "democratic values," which in practice always seem to dictate attacking the United States and apologizing for the USSR and other enemies of this country. Thus he travels abroad as an ornament for functions of the World Peace Council. Thus, too, when Carter sought to raise the defense budget after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Dellums was alarmed by the specter of a resurgent American "militarism" in response to an action taken by the Soviets "to protect their borders." In a speech about this issue he said: "This is the capitalist, monopoly capital structure at work, preparing now to draft eighteen-year-olds to go and fight to protect their oil while every one of them are taking in billions of dollars in profits. . . ."

In his role as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, Dellums is a passionate opponent of the use of American force. But he has different criteria for Communist dictatorships. When he traveled among the Marxist-Leninists of Grenada a few years ago, he did so as an open admirer of their revolution. His congressional office offered the Grenadan revolutionaries advice and encouragement. Writing strongman Maurice Bishop, for instance, Dellums's administrative assistant Carlottia Scott described the Congressman's attitude as follows:

> Ron has become truly committed to Grenada, and has some positive political thinking to share with you. . . . He just has to get all his thoughts in order as to how your interests can be best served. . . . He's really hooked on you and Grenada and doesn't want anything to happen to building the Revo[lution] and making it strong. He really admires you as a person and even more so as a leader with courage and foresight, principles and integrity. Believe me, he doesn't make that kind of statement often about anyone. The only other person that I know of that he expresses such admiration for is Fidel.

When the Reagan administration became concerned by the presence of large numbers of "advisers" from the Soviet bloc on the island and by what seemed the military dimensions of the new airport the Cubans were constructing there, Dellums went off to Grenada to make his own observation. Upon his return he defended Grenada before the House Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs:

> President Reagan characterized [Grenada] as a totalitarian Left government and . . . stated that

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> Grenada "now bears the Soviet and Cuban trademark which means it will attempt to spread the virus among its neighbors." Based on my personal observations, discussion, and analysis of the new international airport under construction in Grenada, it is my conclusion that this project is specifically now and has always been for the purpose of economic development and is not for military use. . . . [I]t is my thought that it is absurd, patronizing, and totally unwarranted for the United States government to charge that this airport poses a military threat to the United States' national security.

When American troops landed in Grenada the year after Dellums made this statement, they discovered a cache of official documents from the Marxist regime. Among them were the minutes of a Grenadan Politburo meeting which took place after Dellums had made his "fact-finding" trip, but before he had submitted his report to Congress. The minutes of this meeting state:

> Barbara Lee [a Dellums aide] is here presently and has brought with her a report on the international airport that was done by Ron Dellums. They have requested that we look at the document and suggest any changes we deem necessary. They will be willing to make the changes.

At the same time Dellums was giving his report to the Marxist junta to edit before he presented it to Congress, an official of the Grenadan revolutionary government was disproving the Congressman's central thesis. Another document retrieved after the liberation of Grenada was the notebook of Defense Minister Liam James. In an entry dated March 22, 1980, James had written: "The Revo[lution] has been able to crush counter-revolution internationally. Airport will be used for Cuban and Soviet military."

IN THE 1960's the New Left colluded with totalitarian movements. But it was clear and candid, sometimes painfully so, about what it was doing. The post-Vietnam Left which has succeeded it not only colludes with totalitarianism but tries to delude people about its aims. It is always ready to believe the official Soviet lie, give the Soviets the benefit of the doubt, or, where the abuses are too great, at least to "understand" horrific Soviet acts as a legitimate reflexive fear of American power. On the other hand, it has an inexhaustible cynicism about American motives and a perpetual inability to locate America's virtues. It is an "us/them" mentality in which "us" are the dictators in Cuba, Nicaragua, and elsewhere in the Third World, while "them" is the United States. Thus, for example, to the *Nation*, a magazine which exemplifies this mentality, the hundredth birthday of the Statue of Liberty was "Imperial Weekend"; but the seventh anniversary of Daniel Ortega's Marxist coup a few months later was a moment to celebrate hemispheric "hope" and an occasion to engage in yet another solo performance of the Sandinista anthem, "The Yankee is the Enemy of Mankind."

The post-Vietnam Left is effective because of its deceitful layering of the apparatus through which it works and also because it has has found a way to support totalitarian movements while appearing to be interested only in improving America's international morality. Its techniques of dissimulation and disinformation have worked. The Sandinistas' lies about their intentions may be obvious enough when studied in retrospect, but their support network in the United States has been remarkably effective in promoting these lies in the nation's political forums. The aims of the revolution that has seized control in Managua are not Nicaraguan in origin; the power that guides it lies in Havana and Moscow. The revolutionary ambition in Central America is not nationalist but imperialist in nature, with the goal of overthrowing the hemispheric system and substituting for it a gulag of interlocked Communist regimes. It is a goal shared by those who work in, and furthered whether wittingly or unwittingly by those who support, organizations like WOLA or CISPES. These people may use the language of American democracy, but for them, democratic politics is only a means; Vietnam has taught them that the neutralization of American power and the victory of Communist revolution comprise a single symbiotic act.

These "secret agents" of the revolutionary cause (to use Conrad's term) fend off inquiries about their political attitudes by accusing their questioners of "red-baiting," which suggests once again that the embalmed corpse of Joe McCarthy lies in state in the Left's consciousness just as Lenin's does in Red Square. But tolerance for unpopular ideas does not require ignoring political commitments that undermine our republic and strengthen its enemies. The time has come in the life of this nation to name these attitudes for what they are and to eliminate the taboos that prevent discussion of the dangers they pose.

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Poland's Jewish Ghosts

Ruth R. Wisse

Following the amputation of a limb, it is usual for the patient to experience sensations as if the limb were still present. This condition is referred to as a phantom limb. In the vast majority of cases, the sensation passes off in time.
—BLACK'S MEDICAL DICTIONARY

ON SEPTEMBER 23, 1986, a ceremony of rare symbolic significance took place in the splendid 16th-century hall of the Collegium Maius of the Jagellonian University in Cracow, Poland. There, in accordance with custom, the rector and senate of the university renewed the 1932 doctorate of Moshe Altbauer, now Professor Emeritus of Slavonic Philology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. As the only Polish Jew of his time who would ever be a candidate for this distinction, Professor Altbauer opened his acceptance remarks with a Hebrew prayer: Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has granted us life and sustenance and permitted us to reach this season. In their own way, the flashing cameras and the scribbling pens of the newsmen among the invited guests testified as much as did the prayer to the historic weight of the occasion.

The Jewish question has been taboo in Poland for many years. Neither the government, the intellectuals, the Church, nor the people have wanted to invoke the painful memory of the more than three million Jews who once formed such a dynamic minority in their country. From the end of the 17th century, when an estimated three-fourths of world Jewry lived within the borders of Poland, the community had grown into the strongest in the history of the Diaspora. Polish Jewry had developed new forms of political and economic organization, new educational institutions to maintain the high intellectual demands of talmudic study, religious movements to revitalize a threatened faith, a national language—Yiddish—with its own thriving culture to complement the sacred tongue of Hebrew, and competing national ideologies that sought to redefine a modern people.

If their thousand-year history on Polish soil set a new standard in the civilization of the Jews, the Jewish presence was hardly less critical to the history of Poland. Invited originally to play a special role in Polish society, Jews had become functionally important as intermediaries between the peasantry and the nobility, as craftsmen and traders and architects of the life of the towns, and, later, as writers and artists, journalists, teachers, and actors on the social and political scene. In no other country did the Jews constitute so high a proportion of the population—10 percent between the two world wars—or such a visible and prominent minority.

But for the last decades, to speak of the Jews of Poland has meant, for Jews and Poles alike, to recall not only the destruction of this vast community at the hands of the Germans during World War II—itself a trauma from which Poland has been slower to recover than any other nation—but the thornier issue of Polish anti-Semitism before the war and after. Most Jewish survivors of the war, confronted by verbal and physical abuse when they tried to return to their homes, left the country. Successive waves of anti-Semitism at almost regular ten-year intervals expelled the rest. Especially bitter is the memory of 1968, when some 20,000 Jews who had tried to rebuild their lives were driven out in a vicious governmental campaign that left Poland one of the most *Judenrein* countries in Europe. It is little wonder that most Poles until recently have been reluctant to enter into a discussion that would inevitably raise questions about the nature of their country they would rather leave unasked.

Thus, the ceremony in honor of Dr. Altbauer was of more than passing interest. Initiated and presided over by the rector of the Jagellonian University, who is also a member of the Polish parliament on the special party list, it bore all the marks of a policy-making event, the boldest of many signs that Poland is adopting a new attitude toward its lost tribe. And indeed, the renewal of Dr. Altbauer's doctorate, which took place during a four-day conference hosted by the Jagellonian University on "Jewish Autonomy in Pre-Partition Poland," was hardly an isolated event. The con-

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ference itself, which attracted scholars from Israel, England, France, the United States, and Canada, was the fourth such international meeting in as many years. While the participants were discussing topics like the terminology of the institutions of Jewish self-government, the myth and reality of the Jewish Council of the Four Lands, the relations of Jews and Christians in private towns, and other aspects of trade, law, and society of the 18th century, most observers concentrated on the contemporary political significance of the event itself—a significance, the editor of Poland's leading political weekly observed, that far outweighed any potential scholarly contributions the participants might make.

At the previous three conferences—held at Columbia University, Oxford University, and the Tauber Institute of Brandeis University—strenuous efforts had been made to cultivate a neutral academic atmosphere in which the troubling history of Polish-Jewish relations could be openly discussed. The published results distill the emotional tenor of those meetings still further.* A newly founded journal of Polish-Jewish studies, *Polin*, will similarly have to eschew tendentiousness and controversy if it wishes to retain both its Polish and Jewish contributors.† But the Cracow conference was an overtly political occasion—at least in the sense that no such meeting could have taken place without the wholehearted endorsement of the Polish government that oversees all aspects of Polish foreign policy. To many observers, indeed, the conference was no less dramatic a declaration of policy than the amnesty of 225 political prisoners that had preceded it by a few days.

That policy seems directed not only at the Jews but at the Jewish state. In conjunction with the conference, the Hebrew University sponsored an extensive tour of Poland for professors and others associated with the university; it was one of about thirty such organized group tours from Israel to visit Poland this year. Though diplomatic relations between the two countries have not yet been formalized, people everywhere were anticipating that consular exchanges, interrupted in 1967, would soon be resumed. In Warsaw it was "known" that the Israeli residence would be ready for occupancy by mid-October. There was active speculation concerning choice of personnel. (Instead of the anticipated exchange of consuls, Israel now has in Warsaw a lower-level bureau of interests.)

In the meantime, the Israelis present had to suffer the indignity of formal nonrecognition. True, the Hebrew University was acknowledged, verbally, as one of the sponsors of the conference, and Professor Khone Shmeruk, who more than anyone has been responsible for the recent development of Polish-Jewish studies, presented to the rector a Hebrew University medal which was received as warmly as it was bestowed. Nonetheless, mention of the Hebrew University's role was omitted from the program and published material. Some of the Israeli tourists complained of the ignominy of a customs control that would not stamp their passports on either entry or exit, lest any memento (besides their dollars) remain to testify to their stay in the country. But their Polish hosts urged a greater confidence in the sincerity of their welcome, predicting that open relations with Israel would come within a matter of days or weeks at most. The Poles also claimed to be looking forward to the event for their own sakes: if even a small number of those expressing the wish to visit Israel were to realize their dream, Israeli tourism would never be the same.

The renewal of contacts between Poles and Jews is obviously of potential benefit to both parties, a welcome admission of shared history and of mutual contemporary concerns. But the truth is that present contacts are no less complicated than those the historians in their academic sessions were patiently trying to unravel. Even as they meet, drink, and reminisce about their common past, Jewish and Gentile Poles are governed by different memories of the same events, and quite a different understanding of the same world. One will have to see whether the apparent good will of their reunion will be able to withstand the strain of all that pulls them apart.

FOR the Israelis now able to travel through Poland, the organized bus trip was not tourism in any conventional sense. Half the group with which I traveled was returning to its native land, the other half was returning to the land of its fathers. In almost every town and city through which we passed someone went off to find what was once his own home or the home of his parents or grandparents. The evenings were burdened by stories of encounters with present occupants who did or did not express regret and compassion, who did or did not invite one in for a cup of tea. At every stop the Polish guides and the scholars among us summarized the history of Jewish settlement, ending with the number of Jews still present in 1939 and then the

* *The Jews in Poland*, edited by Chimen Abramsky, Maciej Jachimczyk, and Antony Polonsky (Blackwell, 264 pp., $24.95), contains selected papers presented at the International Conference on Polish-Jewish Studies held at Oxford in September 1984.

Proceedings of the Brandeis conference on *The Jews of Poland Between Two World Wars*, edited by Yisrael Gutman, Khone Shmeruk, Ezra Mendelsohn, and Jehuda Reinharz, will shortly be published by the University Press of New England.

While not a direct product of these conferences, *Jewish-Polish Coexistence, A Topical Bibliography*, edited by George J. Lerski and Halina T. Lerski (Greenwood Press, 230 pp., $39.95), notes the growth of interest in this area of study and provides a limited research tool.

† *Polin* will be published by the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies in Oxford, England, under the editorship of Antony Polonsky.

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manner and place of their execution. We also retraced the process of genocide in a number of Nazi death camps along the way. My Israeli colleagues came to realize as I did that increased knowledge added nothing to our understanding.

Poland boasts a number of enormous open-air museums, called *Skansen*, that preserve peasant culture through reconstructions of folk architecture and artifacts of past centuries. *Our* open-air museums were the once-Jewish towns which, thanks to the Soviet domination of Poland and the stagnant Communist economy, have barely been altered since the German devastation except for the further decay of time. Shops functioned as they did fifty years ago, a little more primitively and with poorer goods. Any of the hand-drawn maps that appear in the hundreds of communal memorial books that Jewish survivors published after the war could have helped us locate the former bathhouse, the study-house, each building around the marketplace.

But unlike the *Skansen*, these Jewish museum towns are fully inhabited, and the residents watched us fearfully as we stepped from the buses into what is now wholly theirs. Whether or not they once welcomed the German slaughter of Polish Jewry, they are its direct beneficiaries, and those old enough to remember are understandably reluctant to be reminded of the circumstances of their inheritance. Since the Poles did not normally do the killing, they admit no guilt; as further proof of their blamelessness they cite their own suffering at the hands of the Germans. And if the Jews are no longer there, should the houses and shops remain empty?

Yet a busload of Jews is an unspoken accusation. The property of three million Jews now belongs to three million Poles who have never done anything to acknowledge their debt. Though statutes of limitations can protect them from reparations claims, no one can protect the Poles from their conscience.

The Poles are right to imagine that the visiting Jews want something of them; a few seem to understand what that is. In Lezajsk, which became an important stronghold of Hasidism when the charismatic Rabbi Elimelekh settled there in 1775, an elderly Christian woman tends his tomb. Her Yiddish, far more fluent than that of many of her interlocutors, was acquired when as a girl she attended the local Jewish school for girls because there was no good equivalent for Catholics. Five Jews (of a prewar population of 3,000) returned to Lezajsk after the war; now they too are no longer there, but she keeps in touch with some of their relatives in Israel and is always on hand, with her key, to open the cemetery gate.

In Bobowa, an old man warbled a tune the Bobover Rebbe used to sing at the conclusion of the Sabbath, and apologized for his poor memory when he faltered over the words. In Kazimierz, one Pole reminded another in our presence, "Don't you remember the way they used to speak?" When one of our group corrected him, explaining that we were speaking Hebrew whereas the local Jews once spoke Yiddish, he replied, "That's how you used to speak when you didn't want us to understand." In Zamość, birthplace of the great Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz, I tried to ask a resident of his street why the synagogue building, now a library, was closed. Forgetting the Polish word, I demonstrated the handle of a door that would not open. "*Farmakht*," he said cheerfully in Yiddish, proud that the language he once heard all around him still came back to him four decades after he had seen his last Jew. At least for those aging residents who talked to us, the ghosts are undimmed, and it is through them that we caught our most spontaneous glimpses of the Jewish past.

Because the dead Jews have been supplanted by Poles who carry on daily life in their stead, Jewish commemoration depends on local whim. In most places former synagogues are now libraries, schools, dance halls, with all physical traces of their Jewishness erased. The youngsters who use these facilities have never known Jews and seldom heard of their former presence. Certainly the children in Kazimierz Dolny, trooping into a local synagogue, now a moviehouse, on a Sunday afternoon, would not normally attend to the vaulted ceiling or the still visible structure of what was once the women's section and currently serves in part as the projectionist's booth. In the former synagogue of Jaroslaw, now an art school and museum, we saw a frightful painting of a Galician Jew as Judas. The director mounting the show, who had never seen a Hasid, did not recognize the caricature, which has its origins in Polish folk art, or the insult.

ELSEWHERE, fortunately, other attitudes prevail. One may be duly cynical about the motives of the Polish government and of various city administrators in suddenly awakening to the memory of Jewish life in Poland, but the hunt for tourist dollars has already resulted in the restoration of synagogues in Tykocin, Nowy Sacz, Lanctut, Cracow, Warsaw. Tiny groups of Poles, for reasons of their own, study Yiddish and Hebrew and Jewish history. Young curators take pride in reconstructing the landmarks of a people they know only from books and artifacts. In an unusual though not unique instance of Polish dedication to Jewish memory, a sculptor in the resort city of Zakopane has sought out the Jewish cemetery, from which all the tombstones had long since been stolen, and designed for it a monument that he intends to erect among the cows that graze there. He honors the Jews as part of a cosmopolitan Poland that he would like to see restored.

*Remnants: The Last Jews of Poland,** a book

* By Malgorzata Niezabitowska and Tomasz Tomaszewski, Friendly Press, 272 pp., $35.00.

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recently published in the United States, is a loving photographic essay by a young Polish husband-and-wife team that shares this personal interest in Poland's dwindled national minority. Featured before publication in the *National Geographic*, the book reads in part like an anthropological study of an extinct civilization (the kind of work, in brief, for which that magazine is renowned). The interviews, conducted with a range of surviving Polish Jews from members of the diminishing last *minyan* in Lublin to the director of the Yiddish State Theater, emphasize the variety that still characterizes this community in its final phase.

At the same time the book is an expressive document, obsessed with the question of responsibility. The interviewer, a former contributor to *Solidarity Weekly*, seems concerned most of all with the opinion her subjects have about her country, as if their decision to remain in Poland were a referendum on her. Her wistful conclusion is contained in the final sequence of photographs: Pope John Paul II kneels before the monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, symbolizing "for Poles and Jews alike the Pope's desire for reconciliation between the two groups"; elderly Jews, at the seder of the Warsaw Jewish community, say, "We are making our exit; we will be gone in a moment"; a young Jewish boy from a completely assimilated family is shown with the Star of David that he now "always wears." Despite the grim realism of the text and the photographs, the book is clearly informed by the hope that young Jews like the one with the Star of David around his neck will, by their ongoing presence, somehow acquit the Poles.

THE scholarly consensus among historians is that the Jews were originally invited into Poland because they were considered necessary to its development, and began to suffer systematic mistreatment there when they came to be considered superfluous. As a tolerated minority, in other words, the Jews never determined their own fate. So too the fate of their past currently appears to depend on the mood and will of the majority either to suppress the memory of their role in the development of the country or find appropriate ways of recalling it.

There is no faulting the Poles on their commemorative passion in general. Even for the Israelis on our tour, no strangers to memorial stones on every roadside, the number of such commemorative markers and their attendant fresh flowers were a moving reminder of how profoundly the Poles still feel the losses they sustained almost a half-century ago. Whereas Israelis are reminded by memorial tributes to their fallen dead of the freedom they have won as a people, in the Polish consciousness these tributes burn a reminder of freedom lost and still to be regained. Yet where Poles and Jews are concerned, far from bringing the two peoples together, these memorials to the victims of Hitler are a source of friction, as historical antagonisms are now replaced by the struggle *over* history.

In Cracow, for example, some members of our tour attended a ceremony at the Cyganeria Café to mark the erection of a plaque, which was to replace one that had earlier occupied the same spot. The new plaque reads:

> On the night of December 24-25, 1942, a group of soldiers of the People's Guard and the Jewish Fighters Organization attacked the German night club, "Cyganeria," which stood on this location, and inflicted serious casualties.
>
> This plaque was installed on the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Polish Workers' Party to commemorate the heroic warriors.

The older inscription (it is said to remain on the reverse side of the new plaque) had made no mention of the Jewish Fighters Organization, which lost every member of its sabotage team when it blew up this popular gathering place of the German SS as its first act of resistance; instead, the action had been attributed wholly to the Gwardia Ludowa, the Communist-controlled People's Guard, which was then not even active in the area. The original plaque, installed in 1952, served the then-standard purpose of retroactively boosting the prestige of the Communist underground at the expense of the non-Communist Home Army—which had, in fact, been active in local anti-German resistance though not in this particular act of sabotage. But the new inscription creates a convenient brotherhood of the underground that bears no relation to the truth, and also forges an association between the Jews and the unpopular Communist movement. Such is the state of official Polish historiography that the small group of Cracovians, Jews and non-Jews, who fought several years for the change of wording had to be satisfied with this partial victory.

The argument over the proposed Carmelite nunnery at Auschwitz is of a different order. Among the estimated millions killed at Auschwitz, the largest of the extermination camps, were over a million non-Jews, the majority of them Christian Poles. Maintained as a gigantic museum, Auschwitz is a shrine visited annually by hundreds of thousands of Polish mourners, who may well require on this inhuman ground the ministrations of their faith. A prominent Polish Catholic intellectual was innocent of malice when he asked us why Jews were opposed to the presence of the Carmelites at Auschwitz.

Offering examples from our immediate experience, we tried to explain that the Jewish reaction derived not from opposition to Christianity but from the fear that the Jewish dead would be posthumously converted and erased. Indeed, we pointed out, something like this has already happened: while the guide of our all-Jewish tour was appropriately attentive to our Jewish sensibilities, the three members of our group who went to the

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camp independently, joining tour groups of Poles and Americans, had reported back to us that the word "Jew" was either not mentioned at all by the guides or mentioned only incidentally, and that the Jewish commemorative building was in each instance closed. In the light of attempts in Poland and elsewhere to minimize or obliterate the Jewish victims, the Carmelite nunnery could thus be interpreted almost as a provocation.

The kindly Catholic was aghast. How could anyone deny the murder of the Jews? "And the shoes of the children? Aren't those rooms full of shoes of Jewish children?" A partisan during the war, who had fought in the Warsaw uprising, he cried, "Why, we *saw* the horrors that were done to the Jews!" But while uttering these words he unconsciously passed both his hands over his eyes, bringing to mind a scene from the nine-hour film, *Shoah*, in which the Polish courier Jan Karski gives his painful testimony. (Karski had gone to London as the go-between of the Polish resistance and the Polish government-in-exile, bringing with him firsthand information about the annihilation of the Jews.) In the movie, when questioned by the film-maker Claude Lanzmann, Karski admits that he has tried since the war never to speak of what he had seen. Just so this gentle Christian, who in his essential decency could not look open-eyed at an anti-Semitism that is aggressive, persistent, and unresponsive to his own doctrine of love. Between a government reluctant to credit the Jews with the contribution they indisputably made to Poland; local strains of hatred that extend even beyond the grave; and the protective amnesia of some among the finest of Poland's patriots, the Jews have to fight for every Hebrew or Yiddish letter on a plaque, for the hundreds of memorials that alone can recall the millions of absent Jews.

THE tension over commemoration originates in the different function it serves in the national life of the two peoples. Jewish visitors to Poland, including those who once lived there, seek no future in that country, only the protection of their memory. In this respect it is hard to know who fares better, the Cracow Jew whose district stands intact, missing only its 60,000 Jewish residents, or the Warsaw Jew in a transformed city who finds the exact location of his former home by the cobblestones across the sidewalk that once eased the entry of wagons into the courtyard. Both want Jewish landmarks restored in order to preserve a measure of historical and personal sanity.

Commemoration serves quite a different purpose for the Poles. Unlike the Jews securing their dead, the Poles, a subject people, use history as a weapon in the fight for an independent future. History offers them the vocabulary of a free nation, images of past glories, of kings, revolutionaries, and statesmen who refused to accept foreign domination and struggled—sometimes successfully, sometimes in vain—for their sovereignty. The historians who have volunteered years of their lives to restoring the Royal Palace in Warsaw, the schoolchildren who leave their badges on the bier of Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, architect of Poland's interwar autonomy, share the knowledge that they have been plunged from freedom into slavery and the conviction that they will some day reverse the process. When that day comes there will be the inevitable civil clash over degrees of liberty and sovereignty (in which the liberal Left will fare as badly as it ever did in Poland), but meanwhile there is unanimous understanding of the insurgent functions of history.

The problem with such a national claim on history is that it subordinates everything to its purpose. Thus the movie *Shoah* disturbs the Poles not simply, as has been observed, because it presents a number of candidly anti-Jewish figures who give Poland "a bad name." The movie troubles the Poles because its focus on murdered Jews and Polish onlookers inverts the exclusive view of official Polish historiography that World War II was an assault upon *them*, beginning with the invasion by the Soviets and the Germans in 1939 and ending with the destruction of Warsaw by the Germans as the Soviets stood by to ensure their ultimate domination. More than for raising the question of their anti-Semitism, then, many Poles resent the movie's concentration on the genocide of the Jews rather than on the conquest of Poland. Nevertheless, *Shoah*, which touched off widespread debate when it was shown in Poland, is also acknowledged as a welcome challenge to accepted ideas by some who are themselves in the process of fomenting challenges to those in power.

IN THE application of history to current political ends in Poland, the Jews play an unusually complex role. The government reckons that by selectively conceding the Jewish role in Poland's history it will promote in the West an image of greater benevolence. Jaruzelski's circle, out of a ludicrously exaggerated conception of the significance and cohesion of "the Jews" as a factor in American politics, seems to expect that American Jews will, in return for this benevolence, lobby their government to restore Poland's favored-nation status, or at least that they will themselves come in their numbers to Poland as tourists and contribute money to the restoration of Jewish sites. Judging from the numbers of representatives of Jewish organizations who are already "negotiating" with the Polish government, this latter objective is not likely to be disappointed.

The government's conciliatory policy toward the Jews also blunts a weapon of the opposition, for whom a redress of injustice to the Jews had hitherto been an important rallying point. A decade ago, events like a "week of Jewish culture" were used as protest manifestations against the regime, and dozens of dissenters gathered in

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the Warsaw Jewish cemetery for the ostensible purpose of "cleaning it up." Today, by initiating its own program of cemetery preservation and selected Jewish projects that it can control, the government deprives Solidarity of one of its original symbols.

Still, the Jews do remain important to the "anti-government forces"—which claim to number everyone in the country, including many present members of the government—both symbolically and as allies in the impotent war against Soviet Communist domination. Whatever changes, real or cosmetic, have occurred within Poland, Soviet Russia itelf remains overtly anti-Semitic, both in its internal repression of Jewish culture and in the leading role it plays in the international assault on Israel's legitimacy. Poles who hate their Soviet overlord thus have to recognize Jews as comrades-in-arms, or at least as "my enemy's enemy." To be sure, Poles are well aware of the ambiguous history of Jewish relations with Communism, as well as of the lingering Jewish devotion to the Left; but they also seem fully informed about the prominence of Jews among American neoconservatives, and they are keen appreciators of the victories won by Israel over Soviet clients. This sense of common cause is by no means the weakest spur to the renewed Polish interest in the Jews.

To a smaller number of Poles, Jews represent the destroyed ideal of a pluralistic, cosmopolitan Poland. When the Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1978, the news came to many young Poles as a stunning revelation. Here was a world-renowned author who had brought fame to *their* country—their Lublin and Warsaw, their Frampol and Bilgoraj—from quite a different perspective and literary tradition. Singer was their first hint of the part Jews had played in the cultural creativity of the interwar years, a role not unlike that played by Jewish intellectuals of New York in American literary and political culture after the war. The attempt to retrieve that interwar autonomy, if only by keeping the knowledge of it alive, is thus closely associated with a study of the Jewish contribution to Polish literature and society.

A typical case is that of the young scholar who began work on Kafka and then shifted the focus of her research to the circle of Jews who translated and introduced Kafka into Poland. Anyone tracing the prewar currents of modern Polish literature, social theory, theater, music, and even film, would similarly be brought up against the powerful influence of the Jews. The absence of actual Jews means that their traces can be explored in a benign vacuum, without the kind of bite or feeling of competition that accompanies cultural diversity where it actually exists. This makes the Jews a much safer symbol of the hoped-for pluralism and a more intriguing subject of investigation than, for example, the Ukrainians, who are still around in threatening numbers and in flagrant political reality.

For varying reasons and in various ways, the Jews are also a source of fresh interest to many Catholics. The Church is the unchallenged moral authority of contemporary Poland, and Pope John Paul II its popular hero. His attentiveness to the Jews, represented most dramatically in his historic visit last year to the synagogue of Rome, must be taken seriously in a country where over 800 new Catholic churches have been built since the imposition of martial law in December 1981. Admittedly, folk religion does not keep pace with papal encyclicals, and many Poles still cherish the belief that Jews require drops of Christian blood for their bread and matzah and wine. Yet the Pope's reminders of the Jewish roots of Christianity may eventually create a measure of identification and recognition of mutual influence through the centuries.

Of all the European peoples, the Poles alone consider themselves chosen for a historical trial of suffering. This mystical conviction of their election probably owes much to the Jews, and has to take its measure against the Jews' even greater measure of suffering. Thus, while some contemporary Polish artists paint caricatures of Galician Jews to represent Judas, others select the Jew as their model for Christ, the characteristically pensive Christ of Polish folk art or Christ in the stripes of an Auschwitz prisoner, tortured and writhing on the cross. Some of the most searching discussions of Jews and Jewish-Christian history take place in the independent Catholic press, particularly the magazines *Znak* ("Sign") and *Więz* ("Bond").

THE current modest rapprochement between Jews and Christians in Poland thus reveals a cruel irony. It is possible to recognize in the Poles of today the Polish Jews of yesterday, a people with a sense of their own history and a dream of their own destiny but lacking the political means of fulfilling them. Just as the degree of communal autonomy enjoyed by the Jews in Poland fluctuated greatly over the centuries, and always remained subject to the whims of king or autocrat, so the Poles today conduct their politics within the same playpen of dictated boundaries.

Economically, the Poles today are prevented by the Soviets, as they once prevented the Jews, from realizing their ambitions. Many feel that this is the greatest damage being done to the country. A still-active member of Solidarity told us that the exodus of young people with material ambitions is much more serious than that of intellectuals and activists, since the entrepreneurial spirit was really the lifeblood of the movement. A contributor to the underground press showed me her shoes, made by a mathematician-turned-cob-

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bler, as an example of economic resistance to Communism. Independent farmers, merchants, craftsmen, would-be manufacturers, are subverted in their attempt to improve the quality of their goods and their lives by a government that serves Soviet ends, taking from the industrial and agricultural sector whatever it needs, and setting stringent limits on what its citizens may produce or sell. Agricultural initiative recently suffered a major setback when after four years of negotiations the Polish Church had to drop its plans for a Foundation for [Private] Agriculture because the government refused to grant it independence and authority in determining the program. The Church had wanted to raise funds in the West to assist private local farmers much as international Jewish organizations had once done for their fellow Jews in Poland. The spectacle of this stifled economic energy cannot but recall the one-time plight of Polish Jews who had similarly to flee or to "cheat" those trying to undermine their productive capacity.

Especially reminiscent of the Jews, who developed in Poland an astonishing spiritual-intellectual culture in Yiddish and Hebrew, is the way that much of the stunted political and socio-economic drive of the Polish people realizes itself today through talk and religion and literature. In the case of the Jews, although this culture proved no substitute for political security, it did prepare the ground for a renewed national life by nurturing in the young a yearning for freedom and the capacity to enjoy it.

THE Jews could not have lost more than they did in Poland: they were utterly extinguished, leaving only shards of their splendor. But in any comparison of yesterday's Jews and today's Poles, the irony cuts in unexpected directions. The Israeli travelers on our bus tour through Poland were citizens of an independent Jewish state, never more aware than on this graveyard pilgrimage of their hard-earned good fortune. A professor of Jewish thought confessed, "I've always told my children that the difficulties we experience as Israelis should not blind them to the importance of our freedom. Now I can say it with conviction." A teacher of literature said, "Of course I was always a Zionist. But this trip remade me a Zionist." A professor of history recounted his conversation in a Warsaw library with a young woman who, upon learning that he was a Jew of Polish descent, expressed regret that the Jews were no longer around to add color to Polish society. The otherwise courtly young man could not refrain from replying, "That's why I am a Zionist. I don't want to be your coloration."

In truth, this rediscovered appreciation of Jewish national independence had less to do with the catastrophe of Polish Jewry than with the sight all around us of a beaten people. A busload of Jews that begins its tour of Poland in deep mourning is likely to leave with feelings of anguish not for the Jews, but for the Poles.

All the same, sympathy alone is a poor guide to human affairs. On the day before our departure from Poland, I was so stirred to pity by the sight of a cluster of Gypsy women on the street, and by the knowledge that they, like the Jews, had once been singled out for genocide, that I took out my wallet to give them some change. One moment later and $40 poorer I had learned the meaning of the expression "golden hands." If I may put this costly instance of credulity to use as a cautionary tale, I would observe that the high benevolent emotions aroused on both sides by the Jewish "return to Poland" are also a potential invitation to fraud.

Bluntly put, the government that now encourages the field of Polish-Jewish studies already has its agents in place. In addition to the genuine Polish scholars who require and cherish contacts with their colleagues in other parts of the world, and quite apart from the young Poles whose curiosity about the Jews is authentic and unfeigned, there are well-placed government appointees in the fields of Hebrew, Jewish history, and Yiddish whose function it is to monitor the behavior of their fellows and to carry out the directives of their employers. Liaisons formed by these agents with foreign academics and journalists of the opposite sex are regarded by the non-Polish side as evidence of international fellowship, by the Polish side as a valuable source of information.

Behind the government are the Soviets, directing at least part of the new policy. The Poles are a superb proxy for the Soviet Union in its dealings with Israel and the Jews. Russia, being filled with Jews who want to emigrate to Israel, who want to study Hebrew or own a copy of the Psalms, is highly sensitive to internal counterpressure for every external advantage it seeks; the Soviets do not forget the outburst of Jewish national passion that greeted Golda Meir on her arrival in Moscow as Israel's ambassador in 1948. Poland, however, presents no such inconvenience. If, for instance, diplomatic exchanges are to be initiated with Israel, it is safer to have as a go-between a country without a palpable Jewish presence.

The Soviets have also had long experience *in Poland* in exploiting the Jews to their advantage. Cunningly, they helped to poison Polish-Jewish relations after the war by appointing many Jews to visible positions of authority in the unpopular Communist government, thus giving the Poles a safer outlet for their already strong antipathy to the regime. These non-Jewish Jews, in Isaac Deutscher's term, who in severely reduced numbers are still to be found in Poland, remain the perfect vehicle of Soviet designs, being Communist rather than Jewish in their own loyalties, and Jewish rather than Communist in the negative

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image of those who hate them. To compound the irony, some of the children of this generation of Jewish Communists, now in the ranks of Solidarity, continue to expose the Jewish people to exactly the same sort of double jeopardy.

Because of their history in Poland, Jews may be even more susceptible of manipulation than other Westerners. But the consequences of their present dealings with Poland will fall not on them alone. Already the field of Polish-Jewish studies is a pawn in the competition between the universities of Warsaw and Cracow, and undoubtedly also to a limited extent in the struggle for power within the echelons of government. For every Jew who will never set foot in Poland again there is one who wants to honor his murdered brothers, sisters, parents, and children through endowing seats of Jewish learning in Poland, restoring Jewish cemeteries, or engaging in similar acts of commemoration. The political advantage accruing from the flow of such funds into bankrupt Poland is many times what it would be in any non-Communist country.

Lacking institutional reciprocity, the donors in such situations have litle hope of monitoring the use of their money. In Tarnow, as we examined the boarded-up pillars that are all that remain of the city's largest synagogue, a Polish woman came out to tell us that the $5,000 contributed several years ago by "American Jews" to the preparation of the site as a historical landmark had resulted only in these wooden boards that now serve the neighborhood as a convenient *pissoir*. It will be hard for foreigners to get what they pay for or even to prevent their money from being used against their interests.

Nevertheless, knowing all the risks, the state of Israel and Jews of Polish origin around the world may well accept certain compromises as the price of "doing business." Scholarly exchanges, for example, which no one would like to see endangered, are subject in the case of Polish scholars to the approval of a government that routinely awards or withholds visas as a means of keeping citizens in line. No such exchange can be initiated without in some way strengthening the government's hold on scholars in the field. Yet despite their expressed anxieties, few Polish scholars would oppose the development of such international exchanges, or give up the hope of participating in them on something like their own terms.

In the same way, the desire to perpetuate the Jewish communities of the past necessitates a certain suspension of political realism. A Jew who has remained in Poland despite losing his position in 1968, an otherwise astute watchdog of current trends, pointed out to me that 35,000 Jews now live in Spain, a country that expelled and murdered Jews during the Inquisition, and to which they vowed never to return. Wistfully he asked whether a new Jewish community might not be reconstituted in Poland, too. He is afraid of the day when no elderly Jews will remain in Poland to provide even so pitiful a reminder of what once existed.

WE WERE six Jews in the compartment of the three-hour express train from Cracow to Warsaw: two from Israel, two from North America, one from England, and one from Poland—that is to say, one uninterruptedly from Poland, since the Israelis and the Englishwoman were also originally from Poland, as were the parents of the two North Americans. Following a lively exchange of Jewish jokes, the conversation turned serious, and I had a chance to express my discomfort with the phrase, "Poles and Jews," which had been a leitmotif of the conference and much of our three-week trip.

To those who have fought for Polish recognition of the Polish-Jewish past, the phrase is a cause for satisfaction. New monuments that refer to Poles and Jews as common victims of Hitler, and published studies of the self-government of Poles and Jews in premodern Poland, express the readiness of Poles to come to terms with part of their own history. This is a creditable achievement.

But to a North American ear the phrase is puzzling if not offensive. How, I asked my traveling companions, can anyone accept this strange juxtaposition, Poles *and* Jews? Were not the Jews, who lived in Poland from the beginning of its history as a nation, equally Poles? The phrase, "Canadians and Jews," or "Americans and Jews," is unthinkable: in our younger democracies, it is understood that ethnicity modifies citizenship without displacing it. Whether we speak of Jewish Americans or American Jews, the two component features of this hyphenated identity are not in conflict.

The ensuing conversation did little more than establish that Poland was not and never would be America. Yet this conclusion was a painful one, for my companions, who one after the other had long since left Poland to spend what has been in every sense of the word the *better* part of their lives outside it, had to admit that each was in his or her own mind "a Polish Jew." They could never pretend to any other identity. The Jews of Poland did and still do consider themselves the sons and daughters of the country, as Polish as any other Poles.

But the "other Poles" have no such understanding of the Jews. Poland today is linguistically, ethnically, religiously homogeneous as never before in its history. Today more than ever, the Poles affirm their will to independence through an indissoluble mixture of religion and nationalism that leaves no place for any minority, least of all the Jews. The transposition of national into religious imagery is the hallmark of Polish Catholicism:

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> From the beginning Polish culture bore the evident mark of Christianity. . . . For centuries Polish culture has drawn its inspiration from the gospel. Adam Mickiewicz, our great national poet, wrote that a civilization truly worthy of man must be Christian. By Christianity, we are bound to Western culture and that is why we have been able in the past to reject all the various cultures of barbaric peoples. We have been able to resist cultures that our enemies have imposed on us.

Words like these, from a sermon of September 1983 by the martyred priest, Father Jerzy Popieluszko, can be heard today throughout Poland. We know full well the courage it requires to utter them, and the spirit of resistance to totalitarianism that they help to keep alive. As the strongest anti-Communist element in Eastern and Central Europe, Polish Christianity is both a moral inspiration and a singular political force for good. Having noted all this, however, the Jew is more than ever discouraged, for the Poland of Father Popieluszko's vision is so far from its hospitable beginnings as a nation—and so far, even, from the vision of Adam Mickiewicz, who affirmed his own partially Jewish lineage and later defended the Jews as a people—that it has unconsciously wiped away the grandeur of its own past.

It would be naive, finally, to ignore the sad persistence of anti-Semitism as a handy instrument in Polish politics of all parties. A recent article in *Kultura*, which though published in Paris is considered the most influential of all Polish-language political journals, warns of the manipulation of anti-Semitism among both lower party officials and the lower clergy of the Catholic Church. Among the few thousand Jews who remain in Poland there are still enough prominent nominal Jews in the ranks of both the party and the opposition to fuel the old accusations of conspiracy and subversion.

Some Poles today acknowledge the Jews as their phantom limb, that amputated part of the body that leaves an irritating illusion of its presence. The Jews, however, are no longer there. Whether they regret the loss or not, the Poles in their present long-range struggle for political freedom will have to learn to do battle without this severed limb. Any posthumous reconciliation that is to take place between these two peoples can probably best be served by a recognition of their mutual sovereignty, real in the one case, still hoped-for in the other, and of the degree to which that sovereignty is threatened by one and the same enemy force.

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Who Speaks for American Blacks?

Glenn C. Loury

THIS past June a front-page story in the New York *Times* announced "a major shift of thinking" among "many black leaders." According to the report, these leaders are now "openly debating whether black Americans should rely more on their own initiative and efforts in solving critical problems long attributed to racism." Thus, six years into the Reagan era, it turns out that some black elected officials and leaders of major civil-rights organizations have "discovered" self-help as a legitimate tool for advancing the condition of the black poor; some of the problems of blacks, they can be heard to acknowledge, will not be solved by government action, but will require for their successful resolution the direct involvement of black people themselves.

This new insight has of course been encouraged by political reality. Even within the Democratic party, demands for the unlimited expansion of the welfare state have increasingly fallen on deaf ears. Democrats like Charles Robb, co-chairman of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council and possible presidential aspirant, and L. Douglas Wilder, the black Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, can be found these days touting the need for self-help. After two devastating defeats in the 1980 and 1984 elections, and notwithstanding Democratic gains in the mid-term elections this past November, Democrats who would be President have begun to put some distance between themselves and the "society-is-to-blame" negativism and the "government-must-do-everything" mindlessness of the left wing of their party.

The same can be said of the liberal black leadership. On television and in the print media, graphic depictions of the continuing plight of the urban underclass have helped to underscore the argument, advanced for years now by some black conservatives, that at the base of much poverty in the ghetto lie values, and values-influenced behavior, which are, at best, unaffected by government programs, but which may be changed for the better through instruments *other* than government. With this kind of block lettering on the wall, even the most ardent devotee of the old civil-rights strategies should be able to read the message.

Indeed, perhaps recognizing the futility of inveighing against an idea whose time has come, some liberal blacks have chosen the next best thing—to coopt it, and claim that they have been following it all along. Thus, Roger Wilkins writes in the *Village Voice* that blacks have been practicing self-help since the first African slaves landed. Or, in the words of Congressman William Gray (D-Pa.), "The self-help argument is as old as black folks, it's nothing new." One can only wonder, however, if self-help has been such an intimate aspect of black history, why these opinion leaders took so long to get behind it.

Other black leaders have gone a little farther. Mary Francis Berry, an outspoken liberal member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, has declared on national television that both self-help and government programs will have to be parts of the solution to the problems of the ghetto. And Walter Fauntroy, the liberal Congressman from Washington, D.C., recently joined Republican Jack Kemp in co-sponsoring a piece of legislation (itself inspired by self-help champion Robert Woodson) which gives greater support to resident-management groups in federally funded public-housing projects.

It would appear, then, that after years of being vilified, black advocates of self-help are now enjoying a hard-earned if still grudging vindication. But appearances can be deceiving. For what has been accepted in recent years is largely the rhetoric and terminology of self-help, not its substance. For the old-guard black leadership, the conception of blacks as America's preeminent victims, ravaged by a history of discrimination, incapable of advance without the benevolent philanthropy of a supposedly guilt-ridden, presumptively privileged white elite, remains intact. Unless and until this quasi-sacred system of beliefs and excuses, this ideology, is finally overturned, it would be a mistake for those who hold the contrary position to think that their views are finally being taken seriously.

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WHAT are those views? From my perspective, the advocacy of self-help stems not merely from a sense of what is politically pragmatic but from a distinct vision of America. This vision rests on an appreciation of (1) the extent of opportunity afforded all persons in this free society; (2) the consequent responsibility of the individual to apply himself in the pursuit of opportunity; and (3) the primacy of family, church, and local private organizations as "mediating structures"—located between the individual and government—that are uniquely suited to assist those needing help to meet their individual responsibilities. It is from principles such as these, which *are* in fact nothing new to black Americans, that the advocacy of self-help in the black community ultimately springs.

These ideas, these principles, have powerful implications—and not only in the areas of domestic policy and welfare reform. Anyone who stresses self-reliance and advocates a turning away from government must believe that the historic cancer of racism has abated—enough, at least, to make such an internal strategy feasible. Implicit in the embrace of self-help, in other words, is a perception of Americans as, on the whole, a decent and generous people, believing in fair play and, despite a past history of racism and discrimination, now ready to welcome individuals of all races and creeds to make of their freedoms what they will.

Yet it is precisely this understanding of our country—as an essentially good nation worthy of allegiance and support—that will not meet with universal affirmation from black leaders, even those in the halls of Congress, even those who would run for President.

Another implication which flows naturally from the principles underlying the self-help movement is that individuals must be held accountable for their actions in our society. Anyone who believes in autonomy and personal responsibility cannot credit the argument that holding young men and women accountable for their failures amounts to "blaming the victim," or acquiescing in the "sick society" which supposedly makes their failure inevitable. To the contrary, such a person must hold that young men who father children and then walk away from their responsibility to support them are not society's victims, they are their own families' victimizers. Those who carry on the drug trade in the ghettos, or who violently assault and brutalize their black neighbors, are not victims, they are the creators of victims.

Yet this idea, too, is still far from being accepted by the liberal black leadership, let alone acted upon.

Finally, there is the notion, implicit in the advocacy of self-help, that some social tasks are better undertaken through the "mediating structures" of private, voluntary associations. Mutually concerned persons who trust one another enough to be able to exchange criticism constructively, establish codes of personal conduct, and enforce social sanctions against what is judged to be undesirable behavior can create and enforce communal norms that lie beyond the capacity of the state effectively to promulgate.

This is an often overlooked but critical dimension in the argument for greater self-help within black communities. In particular, the call for the engagement of better-off blacks in the lives of the poor is routinely dismissed as, at best, a mere supplement to the activity of resource transfer associated with public assistance.

In fact, however, the private sphere affords an entirely distinct kind of assistance—that focused on transforming the behavior of dependent persons through social, not financial, incentives. Involved here is something more than the old Left-Right squabble over the proper extent of income redistribution. With respect to the problems of early unwed pregnancy, the dropout rates in inner-city high schools, the violent brutalization of law-abiding and family-oriented black people in the poor and working-class communities of this country, there is here an opportunity, and a duty, to mobilize the coercive resources available within the black community itself to enforce behavioral norms.

Yet this can hardly take place when black liberal leaders, paying lip service to the ideal of self-help while ignoring its deep meaning, attribute behavioral problems to external oppression alone and thus scant the powerful forces of internal moral suasion.

TO GET an idea of what black advocates of self-help are up against, consider the experience of William Lucas, the unsuccessful black Republican candidate in the recent gubernatorial election in Michigan. Lucas had switched his party affiliation, and after a hard-fought primary campaign emerged to challenge the Democratic incumbent, James Blanchard. A self-made man, with a strong background in law enforcement, Lucas takes a non-confrontational approach to dealing with whites and was thus able to garner their support; his biography contrasts sharply with that of the traditional black leadership in the state, whose roots are in the far left wing of the Democratic party and who wield power virtually unopposed from their solidly black electoral base in Detroit.

If Lucas had won the election, he would have been the first black governor since Reconstruction. And his victory would have been important for other reasons as well: as a black Republican governor of a major state, he would have legitimized the embrace by black politicians of more conservative views, and shown that to hold these views is not necessarily to be antagonistic to blacks' interests.

That indeed may be why the black Michigan Congressman John Conyers launched a campaign

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to discredit Lucas among blacks—calling him an "Uncle Tom" and announcing to black Detroiters: "I want to tell you that biologically he is black, but he is not black in the spirit of Martin Luther King or the civil-rights movement." Conyers went so far as to compare Lucas with "some Jews who led their brothers and sisters into the ovens of the Holocaust." This last piece of slander from the eleven-term Democratic Congressman was based on the fact that Lucas had sought and received Ronald Reagan's endorsement; according to Conyers, Reagan's policies toward blacks have been *genocidal* in character.

Yet how dare John Conyers talk of Holocaust and genocide when he has done virtually nothing toward solving the problem of physical violence which threatens his constituents daily? The gravity of their circumstances was graphically revealed in the city of Detroit during the 1983-84 school year. The city was then plagued by an outbreak of rapes of young schoolgirls. Parents and concerned citizens were outraged; the mayor and police department held a series of "summits" around the city, trying to mitigate the problem. Police escorts were provided, helicopters were even deployed in particularly troubled neighborhoods to serve as a deterrent. School officials ultimately agreed to advance the starting hour for high-school classes so that students would not have to travel during pre-dawn hours. The situation became so critical, according to the head of a local civic-improvement association, that a group of angry and frustrated ministers privately suggested that "maybe we should begin to castrate a few of these rapists."

WHILE his constituents thus desperately sought to protect their children's lives —in addition to the plague of rapes, there were, in the 1984-85 school year alone, 288 shootings resulting in 25 fatalities in and around Detroit public schools!—John Conyers, chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, was to be heard waxing philosophical about urban violence. It was unrealistic to demand that schools be violence-free, he explained to an interviewer, when there is "violence all around us . . . an environment inundated with drugs, violence, crime, and guns. . . ." Rationalizing this black-on-black violence as inevitable, rejecting the idea that perpetrators be held responsible for their actions, Conyers added: "It's not that blacks are turning on each other, it's that there is nothing else to do but to resort to conduct that is illegal and unacceptable. . . . It's a very easy-to-understand sociological phenomena [*sic*]—people are going to use illegal means to sustain themselves, including violent illegal means."

Conyers saved his selective indignation for the issue of "police brutality." During the autumn of 1983, in the midst of the rape epidemic back in his Detroit district, he took himself off to hold a series of much-publicized hearings on the problems of police behavior toward blacks . . . in New York City! It is far from clear what these hearings accomplished; the single legislative recommendation to issue from them was that changes be instituted in the federal law governing racially motivated violence by law-enforcement personnel, in order to make it less difficult to obtain convictions of police officers charged under the law's provisions.

As for the laws dealing with *non*-police perpetrators of crime, here Conyers's vigilance took a different tack altogether. In the very same legislative session, Congress enacted the Crime Control Act of 1984, which Conyers characterized as "a terrible system . . . brought forward by the Republican majority . . . and a lot of senatorial Democrats who were too lazy or unwilling to stand up and be counted in support of reasonable due-process guarantees." He was particularly incensed about the sentencing provisions of the bill, which "would create new ways of increasing sentences for people found guilty." Concerning a provision allowing the government to appeal sentences that are too short, he lamented that "an unprecedented criminal-justice theory now has been entered into law."

Longer sentences for police officers, shorter sentences for civilians: these are the Congressman's priorities.

Of course police behavior is an issue of concern to blacks. But can there be any doubt that the damage done by the criminally violent within their own communities needs to be regarded with greater concern, if only because it occurs on a much larger scale? In a recent poll in Washington, D.C., 57 percent of the blacks interviewed said sentences should be longer for convicted felons. Are these the people John Conyers is speaking for when, as high-school students in his district are being raped in the streets and gunned down in the hallways, his considerable influence is being used to decry the "brutality" of New York City policemen and to denounce bipartisan efforts to strengthen federal criminal statutes?

Conyers is often portrayed as a crusader, one who has retained his sense of outrage over injustice, and continues to "fight the good fight." Yet the positions taken by this Congressman cover an intellectual and moral void that cannot be concealed by his adversarial rhetoric, a rhetoric that evokes the memory of meaningful struggle only in order to hide behind it. Rather than helping to carry into the next generation the moral authority of the civil-rights movement which produced the leaders of his own generation, Conyers has squandered that authority, until he now constitutes an obstacle in the path of the vast majority of American blacks—who have repeatedly expressed themselves in favor of tougher handling of criminals—and most certainly in the path of the black poor.

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WE MUST be clear about what is at issue here. Left-liberal black politicians are entitled to their views, and will without doubt continue forcefully to express them. There is nothing wrong with this. But there is something very wrong when the political position of all blacks in American public life is tied up with such flawed conceptions. This is why the coherent articulation of an opposition is crucial to blacks, and to the nation. Blacks cannot go it alone in American society, especially if support is to be mustered for bold initiatives aimed at the poorest. Thus, the fact that Conyers, Jesse Jackson, and others are isolated from the broad center of American politics is not simply their own affair.

These men, in their discussion of domestic and foreign-policy issues, express a profound antagonism toward the American state. Their position needs to be tempered by challenge and debate within the black political community, of the kind that occurs within just about every other significant group in American politics. The absence of such challenge is a dangerous circumstance, one that threatens the sense of shared purpose which alone can hold our plural and polyglot society together as a nation.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. understood this; those who have succeeded him evidently do not. King constantly evoked an image of America as a decent, magnanimous, moral, and righteous community, and Americans as a freedom-loving people whose fault lay in their historic failure to achieve in reality the noble vision contained in their civic creed. King's mission was to show Americans how profoundly wrong were the exclusionary practices enshrined in local law and custom. But although he inveighed ceaselessly against America's deep flaws, he chose equally to emphasize its potential for redemption. His method of nonviolent direct action, relying as it did on compromise and cooperation with whites of good will, and rooted as it was in the compelling clarity of the simple justice which he sought, complemented this vision. Tragically, too many of his countrymen, public officials included, were unable during his lifetime to meet him halfway in this search for comity.

Some liberal black leaders today project a different image of America—one which stresses the immorality, intransigence, and selfishness of the American public. Thus, on the first national celebration of Martin Luther King Day, Jesse Jackson decried the widespread focus on King's great unifying "I Have a Dream" speech of 1963 and stressed instead King's opposition to the Vietnam war—an opposition, be it noted, that King came to only after long agonizing with his conscience, and that he always carefully distinguished from the position of the extremists within the anti-war movement.

Jackson also offered his own interpretation of the 1963 speech. Speaking from King's former pulpit in the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Jackson declared: "That so-called 'I Have a Dream speech' . . . was not a speech about dreamers and dreaming. It was a speech describing nightmare conditions. . . . Dr. King was not assassinated for dreaming." A few days later Jackson clarified the meaning of this last comment when, on the MacNeil-Lehrer news show, he repeated his assertion—made during the 1984 presidential campaign but, remarkably, ignored by reporters then—that he believed King had been killed with the assistance of the FBI and/or the CIA. The black conservative who was debating with Jackson on the program refused to comment on this unsupported slander.*

Jackson, in other words, would rather the great man's memory constitute a permanent indictment of his fellow citizens than a unifying symbol of common civic ideals. But listen to what Martin Luther King actually had to say about his American dream, at the 1961 commencement at Lincoln University:

> One of the first things we notice in this dream is an amazing universalism. It does not say some men [are created equal], but it says all men. It does not say all white men, but it says all men, which includes black men. It does not say all Gentiles, but it says all men, which includes Jews. It does not say all Protestants, but it says all men, which includes Catholics.
>
> And there is another thing we see in this dream that ultimately distinguishes democracy and our form of government from all of the totalitarian regimes that emerge in history. It says that each individual has certain basic rights that are neither conferred by nor derived from the state. To discover where they came from, it is necessary to move back behind the dim mist of eternity, for they are God-given. Very seldom, if ever, in the history of the world has a socio-political document expressed in such profoundly eloquent and unequivocal language the dignity and the worth of the human personality. The American dream reminds us that every man is heir to the legacy of worthiness.

This is King's "so-called" dream which, on the occasion of our nation's first celebration of his birth, Jackson told us not to remember.

During his Atlanta speech, Jackson also accused President Reagan of hypocrisy for celebrating the first Martin Luther King day at a black elementary school in Washington, when he had opposed civil-rights legislation in the early 1960's. "Today, President Reagan went over [to a school] and held up little black children in his hands, rubbed his eyes to look tearful." But since Reagan cannot change the positions he took in

* No news source that I have been able to find has seen fit to consider the enormity of the idea that a presidential candidate could, without any proof whatsoever, accuse the government which he is aspiring to lead of murdering a national hero.

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1964, does Jackson believe he should have ignored the holiday?

Again, accusing the United States of practicing terrorism in Central America, Jackson asserted that Reagan had "lost his moral authority"; then he took comfort in the fact that "With all of his power . . . even America will never have a national holiday named after Ronald Reagan."

Even America! Yet it was Reagan who, despite initial opposition, signed the bill establishing the national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, and it was a largely white, thoroughly American Congress which, less than two decades after King's death, enacted it.

Is it a "distortion" of King's memory to dwell on the moving, deeply patriotic, thoroughly American sentiments he expressed again and again? Just what meaning would Jackson have countless future generations of Americans give to the life of this great man? Does that life belong only to blacks, to be "deployed" in support of whatever contentious claim is being urged by black politicians in the name of "justice"? Or, does the life of Martin Luther King exemplify universal virtues, which can be embraced by all who love and seek to further the noblest dimensions of the American tradition, even when they disagree among themselves about some aspect or other of social policy?

If the demagoguery of Jackson, Conyers, and the rest goes unchallenged, poor black people—whose political capital they freely expend—will pay the price. That is why a special responsibility devolves upon those blacks who see in the self-help movement an embodiment of the ideals in which so many Americans—black and white—truly believe.

One cannot expect that black liberal leaders will abandon a lifetime's system of beliefs suddenly, without resistance. The current, small victories won by advocates of self-help should not be disparaged; they are victories, after all, and politics is the art of the possible. But politics is also about vision, about competing ideas, about courage and leadership. Unless visions and beliefs are challenged in the political process by competing visions and beliefs, fundamental change is unlikely to occur. There are truths which need to be spoken, and repeated, and reiterated—even when unpopular—until one's fellows begin to listen, and consider, and finally accept.

The ideals which underlie the advocacy of self-help for the black poor are truths such as these. These ideals must find champions among blacks —men and women prepared to carry on the war of ideas for as long as is needed to achieve the goal. That goal is the complete emancipation of blacks from the enslavement of mind and spirit which inevitably follows in the wake of those who would "lead" their people to permanent dependency on handouts from others.

As in many another struggle, victory in this struggle may not come soon and will not be cheap. Those willing to engage in it need to know they will be in the political arena for the long haul, and to understand that the dignity of their people and the political health of their nation hang in the balance. For this, indeed, is *the* challenge to blacks today. If it is taken up, and seen through to its resolution, then some day we Americans may all of us finally be able to lay to rest the enormous burdens issuing from the historical fact of African slavery.

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How "La Prensa" Was Silenced

Jaime Chamorro

DURING the national insurrection in Nicaragua against Anastasio Somoza, my family's newspaper, *La Prensa,* opposed his regime with all the resources at its command (including a loan of $50,000 to the Sandinistas, which has never been paid back). Indeed, it was the assassination of *La Prensa*'s editor, my older brother Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, on January 10, 1978, which ignited all of Nicaragua into the final battle against Somoza and his regime. When that battle ended in July 1979 and the Sandinistas entered Managua, the whole country celebrated. But the Sandinistas soon betrayed the revolution that had brought them to power. Among the first pledges they broke was the one concerning freedom of the press.

Early on, the Sandinistas mandated a series of repressive laws which gave the government virtually unlimited restrictive powers over the press and other media. Between August 1979 and September 1980 alone, the Sandinistas issued three ordinances—the General Law on Communications Media and Decrees #511 and #512—which made freedom of expression contingent upon a range of deliberately ambiguous criteria, and established prior censorship for whatever the Sandinistas arbitrarily decided were economic and national-security matters.

In short, repressive legislation was mandated and enforced well before the state of emergency declared on March 15, 1982 and before the *contras* had given the Sandinistas the pretext to do what they had been doing all along.

From the beginning, we at *La Prensa* had made up our minds to support the revolution, but without giving up our independence—a policy that was bound to cause trouble. Thus, as early as September 1980, after the first massive anti-government demonstration on the Nicaraguan Atlantic coast (the Miskito Indians protesting the Cuban presence in Bluefields), the government ordered *La Prensa* to stop reporting about the region without prior government approval.

In general, however, since *La Prensa*'s opposition to Somoza was firmly on record both nationally and internationally, the Sandinista campaign against the paper took a while to get started. In the first days there was a series of friendly talks and visits with the Sandinistas, including one meeting which took place at the home of my brother Xavier, the third of the Chamorro brothers, who like the rest of us was a shareholder in the family paper. Present at the meeting were Daniel Ortega (a member of the ruling *junta,* but not yet President) and his companion Rosario Murillo, who had been our elder brother Pedro Joaquin's secretary at *La Prensa* for twelve years.

Both Ortega and his companion explained to us what "revolutionary journalism" should be, and were candid about the kind of newspaper they wanted in Nicaragua. So we were not too surprised when, soon after that, while everyone in Nicaragua was still euphoric over the triumph of the revolution, the Sandinistas started referring to *La Prensa* as "the traitor newspaper," for certain minimal criticisms we had made of the new regime. Nor were we surprised when they began trying to gain control of the paper themselves. Before doing so, however, they had to get rid of the old management.

As a step in this direction they offered to appoint *La Prensa*'s co-editor, Pablo Antonio Cuadra, ambassador to Spain, and to appoint me ambassador to Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay (with residence in Buenos Aires)—thereby getting us both conveniently out of the country. This would have left the paper in the hands of Xavier Chamorro, who had suddenly discovered the benefits of Sandinismo. When we turned down the Sandinistas' gambit, they contrived a plan which would later become known as "Operation Trojan Horse": on Sunday, April 20, 1980, on direct orders from the Sandinista *comandantes,* a group of *La Prensa* employees affiliated with one of the Sandinista unions took over the paper from inside, shutting down operations for over a month.

When, after all this, *La Prensa's* board of directors still refused to give in, the Sandinistas sent an emissary to the home of two members of the board—Carlos Holmann and his wife Ana Maria

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—with an ultimatum from Bayardo Arce, one of the nine *comandantes* of the National Directorate: if the board did not consent to the Sandinista proposals, they would confiscate not just *La Prensa* but everyone's personal property as well. The Holmanns indignantly stood up and asked the emissary to leave.

By the end of April the pressure had intensified, and the Sandinistas summoned *La Prensa*'s directors to a meeting with three *comandantes*: Bayardo Arce, Carlos Nuñez, and Humberto Ortega. The *comandantes* insisted that the only person acceptable to them as editor of *La Prensa*—the only one they considered "*consecuente*" (sympathetic and understanding)—was Xavier Chamorro. They stated further that although we did not realize it, we were being used by the CIA to injure the revolution. After a few more exchanges along these lines, I finally told Bayardo Arce that as long as *La Prensa* still belonged to its legitimate owners we would go on acting as its directors. If the Sandinistas wanted it otherwise, they would have to confiscate the paper and put their own names on the masthead. The *comandantes*, having expected a different response, were surprised and confused.

In the end, a compromise was worked out whereby a new Sandinista newspaper—*El Nuevo Diario*—was created. Xavier Chamorro left *La Prensa* to become editor of the new paper, taking with him those staff members who were Sandinista supporters and a substantial financial settlement. On May 26, 1980, thirty-five days after the attempted takeover, *La Prensa* resumed publication. It quickly doubled its circulation and once again became Nicaragua's leading newspaper.

IN 1981 the Sandinistas changed their tactics and began a systematic campaign of harassment and intimidation against *La Prensa*. We were forbidden to publish a variety of items, including editorials or letters to the editor touching in any way on the banana crop or on the government's negotiations with the Standard Fruit Company; any kind of news or commentary about the temporary shutdown of the independent Nicaraguan Permanent Committee on Human Rights; any reference to a poll taken by *La Prensa* which showed the regime to be losing the support of the people; any mention of the former Sandinista war hero Edén Pastora who, after growing disillusionment with the revolution, had gone over to the opposition. We were also forbidden to allude in any way to the fact that we were being censored.

Between July and October 1981 alone, the Sandinistas closed down *La Prensa* five times: on July 10 (forty-eight hours), for publishing photographs of Catholic billboards destroyed by unknown vandals; on July 29 (forty-eight hours), for an article on the wedding of Prince Charles that supposedly showed disrespect to Carlos Fonseca, one of the founders of the FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front); on August 19 (seventy-two hours), for having reproduced a news cable attributing statements to Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto, which the censor said were false (later *La Prensa* proved that the statements had indeed been made by D'Escoto); on September 29 (forty-eight hours), for publishing an interview in the September 27 edition that contained charges against government functionaries and hence supposedly harmed the nation's economic stability; on October 2 (forty-eight hours), for repeating the previous "crime" of September 27. There were also other occasions when the Sandinistas arbitrarily closed *La Prensa* without giving any reason at all. They did this simply for purposes of intimidation—to show us they could close the paper whenever they wanted to.

To describe each and every shutdown of *La Prensa* in detail would be tedious, but it is worth noting that we were never once permitted the right of defense or appeal on any of these occasions. Every forced closing of the paper depleted our financial resources and compelled us to impose a form of self-censorship—but, despite these hardships, *La Prensa*'s circulation kept growing. Then came the state-of-emergency declaration of March 15, 1982, which carried with it a whole series of new and more sweeping restrictions against the press. In addition to these restrictions, the government censor, Captain Nelba Cecilia Blandón, felt obliged to issue her own decree, requiring all media, both written and broadcast, to submit their daily programs or editorial copy to her office for prior censorship.

On top of all this, a new terror swept through Nicaragua in the form of Sandinista mobs which the government unleashed at will against its opponents. These *turbas divinas* ("divine mobs"), as the Sandinistas called them, were an updated version of earlier Somocista mobs. For the sheer power to intimidate, however, the Sandinista *turbas* far surpassed their predecessors. On repeated occasions they attacked *La Prensa* installations and besieged the homes of its owners and functionaries (including my own, and those of the widow, son, and mother of the former editor), throwing stones, painting obscene words and slogans on the walls, pounding on doors, and hurling insults at the people inside. Only after they grew tired, or when the "operation" was considered finished, would the attackers finally depart, leaving behind defaced walls, broken windows, smashed vehicles, and terror. Since the mobs were protected by the police and led by one or another Sandinista functionary—sometimes a man, at other times a woman—they could attack with impunity.

ON ONE occasion three of us working late at the paper were forced to spend the night in our offices because the mob, attacking

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after the work day was over, prevented us from leaving. In the course of this particular siege, the chief of a Sandinista patrol arrived on the scene and told me not to worry, nothing would happen because he was on the job (supposedly to protect *La Prensa* from the mob, but in reality to supervise them). All in all, some 20 percent of *La Prensa*'s employees left the country during this period, because of threats or acts of physical violence against them.

On another occasion, *La Prensa* was attacked by a mob during the night. To keep them from entering, two of our security guards fired their pistols in the air (one had a .38, the other a Magnum .357) and then turned a fire hose on the crowd. This enraged the mob leaders who ordered an assault. The guard with the Magnum .357 fired one shot at the leaders, but the other guard did not fire at all. In the general confusion, further shots were fired by unidentified persons and two people were injured. Suddenly the Sandinista security forces arrived on the scene and occupied *La Prensa*, arresting everyone in the vicinity.

Following this incident, Tomás Borge, Minister of the Interior, summoned me and two other staff members, Pablo Antonio Cuadra and Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Barrios (son of the slain editor), to his office and made the following proposal: if *La Prensa* agreed to condemn the security guards for assaulting people who were peacefully protesting *La Prensa*'s "counterrevolutionary attitude," the newspaper (still occupied by Sandinista police) would be returned to us and the security guards would not be punished. We told Borge that while we regretted what had happened, the security guards were only doing their job and their weapons had been duly registered with the Sandinista police.

Subsequently, there was a trial and *La Prensa*, taking over the guards' defense, was able to establish in court that one person had been wounded by a .38 and the other by a .22. Since the only guard who fired used a Magnum .357, someone else had obviously discharged the other pistol in order to incriminate us. Despite this and other details, the two guards were sentenced to three-year terms, half of which they served in prison, and the other half on parole.

In the meantime, the military occupation of *La Prensa* had lasted for three days. Since the security guards were in jail, there was no legal justification for the takeover, but the Sandinistas had their own motives: they used the time to go through *La Prensa*'s archives and make extensive photocopies of what they found there. (At least 2,000 such copies were made, according to the meter we had on *La Prensa*'s xerox machine.) They also brought in expert locksmiths who forced open locked doors and desk drawers, as we found out when we finally got back to our offices and discovered that most of the documents in our files had been rearranged.

The Sandinistas also used the mobs to attack the distribution points throughout Nicaragua where *La Prensa* was sold. Many owners and employees of these agencies were harassed, to a point where many of them were finally forced to stop selling *La Prensa*. Thus it was not only freedom of the press that was (and is) threatened in Nicaragua but also the freedom to work, since many people made their living selling the paper. We were also told by a number of *La Prensa* agents that some of the people who turned up in these mobs had made a living doing the same thing under Somoza.

The willingness to welcome back old Somocistas seems to be a fundamental characteristic of *Sandinismo*: many of the same thugs who once worked for Somoza now fill the state agencies and are successfully integrated into the Sandinista Defense Committees and other government positions where their services are appreciated. That is why many of us in Nicaragua say that *Sandinismo* is *Somocismo* of the Left; it is *Somocismo* writ large.

IN ADDITION to attacking distribution points, the Sandinistas also carried out personal attacks against staff members and employees of *La Prensa*. On July 24, 1982 Horacio Ruiz, one of the paper's most respected editors, was forced into a car on a Managua street by four men, two of whom carried machine guns. Ruiz was beaten so severely that he lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness, he was told by one of his assailants, "Now you will find out what the mobs are." They then beat him once more, and one of the men with a machine gun threatened to kill him. Finally Ruiz was driven to a remote spot and thrown out of the car.

La Prensa's account of the attack was partially censored. We were not allowed to mention the machine guns, for instance, or to respond to blatant and absurd discrepancies in the government's version of the incident (*Barricada* and *El Nuevo Diario*, the two government papers, attempted to write it off as the anger of a "jealous husband"). We were also prohibited from mentioning denunciations of the attack that had been carried by various international news agencies.

Other *La Prensa* reporters have been imprisoned on trumped-up charges: Luis Mora Sanchez and photographer Jorge Ortega Rayo, for having allegedly worked with the counterrevolution (Sanchez was imprisoned twice, the second time in a cell with a violent gang that beat him up); Norman Talavera, for having cooperated in the publication of a censored Catholic newspaper (the Sandinistas were trying to intimidate Talavera into giving up coverage of Church events in *La Prensa*); Alejandro Cordonero and Enrique Garcia, for publishing a mimeographed newsletter of limited circulation called *Prisma*. Cordonero and Garcia were interrogated for fifteen days, and the questions they were asked dealt exclusively with

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their work at *La Prensa*. About all these arrests we were forbidden to publish anything.

THE grounds for censorship of *La Prensa* were equally trumped-up. To justify their policy, the Sandinistas at first claimed that it applied only to information or news pertaining to national security; later, they justified it on grounds that the country was in a state of war, and drastic measures were necessary. But these excuses and pretexts were a form of juridical propaganda aimed at the outside world. Inside Nicaragua, the people knew better. They knew that what was being censored usually had nothing to do with national security, and that it was being kept from the public because it took issue with the regime's politics, its system of one-party government, its corruption (embezzlement, misappropriation of public funds, large-scale waste), and its creation of a monstrous bureaucracy to implement the dictates of an emerging octopus state. They knew further that it was not just political and administrative affairs that were subject to censorship but all expressions of popular protest, all forms of pluralistic activity, all references to the endeavors of the Catholic Church, and all incidences of natural disaster such as floods, bad harvests, and the like.

Now and then the government ended up censoring itself. One such case was an interview given by Captain Nelba Blandón, the government censor, to Eloy O. Aguilar of the Associated Press. In the interview, Captain Blandón defended censorship as "an instrument for defending the revolution" and declared that while some people abroad might not understand it, the Sandinistas were not going to let the press be used as a tool for "destabilizing society." Since *La Prensa* subscribed to the AP wire service, we tried to publish the interview, but Captain Blandón deleted it. When Aguilar returned to Nicaragua, he asked Captain Blandón why she had, in effect, censored her own remarks. Her reply was revealingly totalitarian: "Because the statements I gave you were for publication outside the country, not for here in Nicaragua." As an old Nicaraguan proverb puts it: "Light outside and darkness in your house."

In setting up their repressive machinery, the Sandinistas sometimes received help from the large number of foreign sympathizers (the so-called "internationalists") who are currently living and working in Nicaragua. Early in the revolution, for example, the government decided to discredit *La Prensa* by launching a campaign of calumny and misinformation against it. Several members of the "internationalist" community—most of them Chilean—took part in this campaign, working in conjunction with the Sandinista-dominated National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN). UNAN spent a considerable amount of state funds to publish and distribute a pamphlet supposedly proving that *La Prensa* was "counter-revolutionary," and had received advice and counsel from *El Mercurio*, the Chilean newspaper which was allegedly involved in destabilizing Salvador Allende's regime.

Another Sandinista smear campaign alleged that *La Prensa* had received funding from the CIA. The background of this campaign was as follows. In 1985 *La Prensa* received a grant of $100,000 from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). In 1986 we received a second grant of $50,000. In neither of these cases was *La Prensa* paid in cash. The money went to our supplier, who in turn shipped us the ink, chemicals, and other raw materials necessary for publishing a newspaper.

As is well known, the NED is funded by the U.S. Congress, and its board of directors is bipartisan. Moreover, the grants were publicly announced by the donor. Nonetheless, the Sandinistas used the ensuing publicity to assert that *La Prensa* was receiving money from CIA agencies, and continued to repeat this transparent lie as an "established fact." But this is not surprising, coming as it did from a regime which invariably links anyone who disagrees with or opposes it with the CIA—a regime whose established facts have been shown over and over to be established lies.

II

THE actual process of censorship was nervewrackingly methodical. After the day's edition of *La Prensa* was completed, we were required to send three copies of every page (including advertisements and comic strips) to Captain Blandón's office, along with two pages of "filler"—material that had previously been approved and hence could be substituted for whatever the censor decided to cut out. This decision, which had once taken about two hours, later averaged between four and six, and in March 1986 actually reached the absurd level of six hours and fifty minutes. The delay was deliberate, of course, and served, among other things, to hurt *La Prensa* financially, since it sometimes entailed increasing the number of work hours by as much as 60 percent.

After the censor had finished her job, we were sent a memo stipulating the changes that had to be made. Where, formerly, we had at least been permitted to call in these changes by telephone, cutting down somewhat on the delay, we were now required to send the corrected copy back to the censor for a second going-over. This additional procedure—which could be called dual censorship—added another hour to the already prolonged delay, thereby furthering the Sandinistas' aim of making *La Prensa* both bland and belated in its coverage. Whereas the two government newspapers, *Barricada* and *El Nuevo Diario*, came out early in the morning, *La Prensa* was lucky to appear at seven or eight that evening, by which time

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the "news" was either old or totally diluted. Sometimes, in fact, that day's paper did not come out until early the following morning. Throughout this process, needless to say, the government never acknowledged what it was doing. Directives from the censor reached our offices bearing the slogan "Free Nicaragua," and the word "censor" itself was never used—the official term was "revise."

Between the time the Sandinistas came to power, and April 1986, there were forty-two instances when *La Prensa* could not be published at all owing to excessive censorship (though on several of these, we ourselves made the decision not to publish, as a form of protest). Many times the cuts made were so drastic that even the additional filler did not suffice to make up an edition, in which case nothing could be done, since we were not allowed either to leave blank spaces or to publish the censor's directives about cutting certain passages—another instance of the censor censoring herself.

When an article came back from the censor's office, it came with one of three possible directives: we were told either to cut the article entirely, to cut out certain paragraphs, or to change the headline. The first of these directives was obviously the most drastic, but the second was not much better, since deleting large sections of an article could change its meaning to a point where the editors had no choice but to withdraw it entirely. Where headlines were concerned, the censor specialized in distorting the meaning of an article in the hope, presumably, that the reader would skip its contents and go on to something else. For instance, we once published a verbatim announcement from the Minister of Industry. Since the announcement concerned a pending decline in industrial production, we headlined it quite straightforwardly INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION WILL DECREASE BY 20 PERCENT NEXT YEAR. The censor found this unacceptable, however, and after a number of go-rounds finally agreed to FUTURE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION ANNOUNCED.

This kind of petty ideological wrangling is daily fare in the Nicaragua of today, a country where the names of opponents of the regime like former world boxing champion Alexis Arguello cannot be mentioned in the press, and where it is forbidden to publish a photograph of Cardinal Obando y Bravo, the archbishop of Managua and the country's principal Catholic leader. Indeed, the Sandinista obsession with Cardinal Obando has reached such a level of absurdity that the censor once deleted the word "Cardinals" from a headline we ran about the 1985 World Series, and replaced it with the words "St. Louis."

The level of censorship prevailing in Nicaragua at any given time varied with circumstances. It tended to go down briefly when Nicaragua was the focus of world attention or when important visitors were in the country—such as Jimmy Carter or the former President of Venezuela, Carlos Andrés Pérez—only to go up again when the Sandinistas were no longer being observed.

But censorship was only one of the problems confronting *La Prensa* under the Sandinista regime; it also faced debilitating economic and material problems. One of these problems was the difficulty of obtaining foreign currency from the government to pay for the imported raw materials without which *La Prensa* could not operate. A second problem was the paper supply, which was also controlled by the government and stringently rationed. For a certain amount of time, *La Prensa* had been allowed to publish twelve-page editions, but as of February 1986, the quota was reduced to six.

To remedy the situation, some members of Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) made an offer in April 1986 to supply *La Prensa* with paper free of charge, but only on one condition: the Sandinistas had to guarantee that the gift would be used as a supplement to *La Prensa*'s regular allotment, so that the newspaper could come out in larger editions. Needless to say, the Sandinistas refused to make this guarantee. They made it clear that if *La Prensa* accepted the donation, the government would not feel obligated to supply any paper at all, and would deduct what the IAPA supplied from *La Prensa*'s regular allotment. In a letter to me dated April 29, Rene Nuñez, one of the government ministers, warned that even if it did get additional paper, *La Prensa* would still be limited to six pages. We had no choice, therefore, but to decline the generous offer.

As though these problems were not sufficient, the government, as of January 1, 1986, had ordered a 100-percent increase in salaries (the third one since they came to power) for *La Prensa* employees; a few days later the national currency was devalued 250 percent, causing a proportional increase in the price of paper and other raw materials. At the same time we were denied permission to raise the price of *La Prensa*, so there was no way we could compensate for these additional costs. Another blow fell on February 7, when we were ordered to reduce our weekly number of pages from 68 to 36, thus automatically reducing our advertising revenues by 50 percent. Struggling against this tangle of economic problems that the government itself had created, we were then ordered to reduce our circulation because the Sandinistas could no longer obtain the foreign currency to purchase the paper needed to maintain it.

On April 11, 1986, in the midst of all this, Xavier Chamorro, editor of *El Nuevo Diario*, suddenly made an offer to buy *La Prensa* for a substantial amount of U.S. dollars. Both *La Prensa*'s employees and its board of directors categorically rejected this offer, suspecting immediately that the Sandinistas were behind it.

What better way, after all, to solve their image

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problem than by acquiring *La Prensa* and turning it into a puppet newspaper that would be mildly critical of the government, but not on fundamental issues? Then they could eliminate the cumbersome machinery of censorship and tell the world there is a free press in Nicaragua. Apart from the trickery involved, we were also personally offended by the Sandinista offer, for essentially it was an offer to sell out our ideas and values and thus betray the history and struggle of *La Prensa* and the memory of its murdered editor—whose own words had been banned from the paper by the Sandinista censor ever since 1982.

Postscript: From the moment the Sandinistas made their offer to buy the paper we sensed that something definitive was about to happen, and we were right. On June 26, 1986, the Sandinistas closed *La Prensa* for perhaps the last time. Shortly thereafter, President Daniel Ortega declared in an interview that the paper would remain closed as long as there was a war on, or until we changed our political attitudes—a statement that would have provoked an avalanche of protests in any free country. But Nicaragua is not a free country; ever since 1979 the Sandinistas have been methodically silencing the country's independent voices one by one. Now there is one less voice to speak out against the prefabricated reality that the Sandinistas export abroad to confuse and manipulate international opinion.

In a more profound sense, however, we cannot be silenced. The Sandinistas can destroy radio stations; they can shut down newspapers; they can beat, imprison, exile, or murder whomever they please—but they cannot ultimately silence the Nicaraguan people. They cannot censor our thoughts, they cannot imprison our hunger for freedom, they cannot exile our sense of justice. In the end, it is time itself that is against them and not even the Sandinistas can censor, imprison, exile, or murder time.

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In the Capital of Modern Cruelty

Algis Valiunas

TOURISTEN RAUS. Tourists out. It was written, not on the Wall itself (which was covered along that stretch in the Kreuzberg district with other graffiti less transparent in meaning, esoteric doodlings done with some flair by adept practitioners of the metropolitan guano school), but on some kind of machine housing hard by. The directive was rhetorically inadequate for its purpose; it did no more than register distaste for intruders, and lacked the glint of menace required actually to chase anyone off. We laughed and walked on, along the Wall. (Although my host, an old friend, was not a tourist but an American diplomat assigned to the U.S. Mission in West Berlin, I assumed that the inhospitality extended to the likes of him as well.)

On this evening during the last week in May, my first night in town, Berlin was chill, gray, dank, dungeon-grim, the sky like a lid bolted shut, a misty rain falling that seemed the condensation of human misery. Viewing conditions were ideal for what we had in mind. Where the street curved, and the Wall along with it, there was a public observation platform. Such platforms stand here and there along the Wall's length, and they are intended to serve as reviewing stands, from which Western observers may inspect the Soviet bloc's supreme achievement: the perfection of lethal force against its own citizens.

We climbed the stairs to the platform, and looked out through the gray flickering rain at the no-man's-land that stretched between the Wall right before us and another wall nearly one hundred yards away. Directly across from us, perhaps thirty yards off, stood the border guards' watchtower, its observation post covered with the coppery mirrored windows that you see in countless new office buildings, including a few in East Berlin. One of the windows was open, and we could see a guard standing inside, with his back to us. When he turned around, he stiffened with surprise at finding himself under surveillance. Yet his manner as he looked us over was casual and disdainful and certainly befitting a man who had a machine gun and who saw that we did not. I did my best to endow my own contemptuous stare with deadly firepower, but the guard was well-armored. When he turned away, it was plainly not in disquiet or shame, but out of boredom.

The impression he made on me was more striking than the one I made on him: even in perfect safety, and despite my bold look, I felt an inward cringing. The predator's regal power of life and death was unmistakably his; although I stood beyond lawful reach of that power, I felt it all the same, and got a taste of the fear and disgust that his feral lordliness must inspire in those who have to acknowledge him as their keeper. In this elemental mastery—which is so effective because it is the sort that men tend to appreciate most readily—lay the success of the East German terror state. By the judiciously focused use of terror, the German Democratic Republic has pretty well done what it wanted most desperately to do when it built the Wall twenty-five years ago: it has convinced East Germans who in ever increasing numbers were finding their homeland uninhabitable that there is after all a crueler fate than having to live in East Germany.

Here were the true foundations of the German Democratic Republic, and they appeared to be unshakable. Shaped like a scepter with modern lines, the watchtower was not merely a perfect emblem but also the most fearsome embodiment of East German sovereignty. There are 289 of these watchtowers along the Wall; they tend to be placed within shooting distance of one another, so that the guards themselves should not be led into temptation. My friend enumerated various other standard features of the "modern boundary," as the no-man's-land is known to its proprietors: the contact fence on the eastern side, rigged with light and sound alarms; German shepherd dogs on patrol, to see to anyone the human sentries might happen to overlook; the trench, five meters deep, which runs down the middle of the boundary in order to inhibit the passage of any unauthorized motor vehicle, such as, say, a hijacked tank. In the sector we surveyed, I could not make out the trench, which is said to be hard to spot, and I did not see any dogs, but the modern boundary nevertheless looked simply impassable.

We stood on the observation platform for some time. I stared and stared, taking in the malevo-

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lence that the terrible landscape radiated, and as I went on staring, the place went out of mental focus for a moment, so that it seemed literally inhuman, as alien as the face of some inconceivably remote star. When this brief spell of disorientation had passed, I recognized the feeling of unearthly strangeness as one I had experienced in Dachau, where I had gone as a tourist several years ago. There, too, the familiar elements of the landscape—concrete, metal, earth, sky—had suddenly turned uncanny, unidentifiable, as though they had no place in the world I knew. These mild and fleeting episodes of cognitive disarray were, I suspect, unsuccessful escape attempts; what I was attempting to escape from was the shame I felt in these places, shame at the humanity I had in common with the men who had conceived and brought forth such abominations, and in common with the other, decent men who had failed to prevent their being brought forth.

WHEN we climbed down from the platform, I was certain that, whatever else I might happen to see in Berlin, none of it would rival in significance what I had just seen. Here was the sight that revealed the soul of the place. As my friend and I walked on, I told him that I could imagine how the Wall's presence must crush Berliners' spirits under its intolerable weight, how it must be a source of relentless and crippling pain. He said that people really seemed to pay it no mind, to go about their lives as though it weren't even there. I said I couldn't believe it. He told me it seemed to be so, all the same.

Thus was I made acutely aware how elusive the significance of things might be for a tourist in Berlin. TOURISTEN RAUS: perhaps I had been wrong to laugh at the warning that this was no place for tourists, that these awful sights were not meant for outsiders. As I reconsidered the warning, I read in it the implication that a mere visitor's eyes necessarily lack the acuity required to see things as they are there, that long acquaintance with the peculiarities of the local atmosphere is indispensable to clear-sightedness. I had wanted not merely to see Berlin as a tourist did, but to understand it, at least to some degree, as a Berliner did. Yet I was already deep in incomprehension. TOURISTEN RAUS: only a Berliner can divine the spirit of the place, the warning insisted, and, despite President Kennedy's celebrated avowal, we are not all Berliners.

Once I had acknowledged that my view of the place would inevitably be an alien and partial one, I felt free to give in to my tourist's bemusement with the very things that the natives ignore. Berliners might scarcely give the Wall a glance, but, if you are not a Berliner, the Wall commands your attention, and holds it. When it is in sight, it is what you look at; when it is out of sight, you wonder where it is. So even when it disappears from view for a while, perhaps for quite a while, it does so only to increase its fascination with each reappearance. It takes you by surprise again and again: you spot it just down the street or through a break in the trees; you turn a corner and hit an abrupt, inarguable dead end; you can even go for a spin in the countryside and suddenly find it on either side of the road, outlining a slender freedom peninsula at the knobby end of which, in the agreeable but precarious suburb of Steinstücken, you make a U-turn and head back toward firmer ground.

The Wall curves right around the dapper little restaurant we sought out in a dim corner of Kreuzberg one evening, and found full up. It is not always so accommodating. Buildings that straddled the frontier were knocked down, so that no one could make his escape by stepping out the back door. (One of the first to die in an escape attempt was a woman who jumped from her fourth-story East Berlin apartment into the West Berlin street below.) In one stretch the walls of a cemetery were incorporated into the Wall, and the cemetery's gates bricked shut. East Germany's statesmen knew just how badly their constituents wanted out.

The Wall comes up just behind the rebuilt Reichstag, tauntingly. There, in back of the visitors' parking lot, six white crosses commemorate those who died nearby in their attempt to escape. Some of these crosses and several elsewhere along the Wall are marked *Unbekannt*, all that is known of those dead being their courage and their destruction. The date of the most recent murder near this site is October 1984; perhaps one of the guards we saw lounging in the watchtower was the one who took aim and squeezed the trigger. Regulations stipulate that, once a border violator has reached the raked strip of sandy ground which begins about fifteen meters from the Wall, the guard is not to fire a warning shot.

Along this section, as in many others, the Wall itself does not mark the boundary between East and West; the actual boundary line is a few yards this side of the Wall, and signs posted along the line warn you not to cross it. Some two hundred yards down from the Reichstag, near the Brandenburg Gate, we saw a German in his early twenties stride past the warning signs and right up to the Wall. Just there the Wall is a metal fence about seven feet high rather than the usual concrete one about twelve, and the young man, irrepressibly ebullient, bounced up and down repeatedly, exhorting his companion to get a photo of him with his head over the Wall. There are doors here and there in the Wall, and East German guards have been known to step through and arrest trespassers on Eastern territory. One did not choose that moment to do so. TOURISTEN RAUS.

EAST BERLIN does not exactly encourage visitors, but it does make it easier for them to get in than for the natives to get out.

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I entered East Berlin with my friend by way of Checkpoint Charlie, the sole point of entry above ground—the U-bahn, or subway, being the other way in—for diplomats of the three Allied powers, the U.S., Britain, and France, that still take part in the administration of West Berlin.

On my way into East Berlin, I received an object lesson in diplomacy that illuminated the difference between the official Eastern and Western understandings of the Wall's status. After my friend signed us in at the American border station, we proceeded to the East German border control in his car; on our way, we rolled the car windows up, although the day was warm. When the East German border guard peered through the window on the driver's side, I showed him the cover of my passport and the photograph inside; my friend displayed instead a form of Allied identification called a flag card. According to Western protocol, our diplomats need not display their diplomatic passports, and they are encouraged not to let the East German guards touch their identification papers; this official diffidence is a precaution taken to prevent the East Germans from stamping these papers with a visa. By observing these niceties at Checkpoint Charlie, my friend upheld the Western contention that this checkpoint is not the international frontier the East claims it is but rather a mere sector crossing, an entrance to the Soviet-administered area of the city that the four Allied powers continue to oversee jointly, by virtue of their conquest of Nazi Germany.

Certain conquerors make more demanding overseers than others, of course. Soviet policy in postwar Berlin has been—as more prudent allies would have expected it to be—inveterate defiance of the London Protocol of 1944 and the Potsdam Conference of 1945, in which the Allies determined the procedure by which they would occupy and administer a defeated Germany. Germany was divided into four zones of occupation, and an Allied Control Council formed to direct the administration of the entire country; Berlin was separately and similarly divided into four sectors, and an inter-Allied *Kommandatura* formed to direct the administration of the entire city. The occupying forces were to work toward the establishment of a suitable German government—the government of a single Germany, with Berlin as its capital. There was, however, to be some disagreement about just what sort of government would suit Germany best.

After Soviet walkouts in the spring of 1948 threw a wrench into the workings of the Allied Control Council, the three Western Allies proceeded on their own to enact currency-reform measures for the Western-occupied zones of Germany; these measures were intended to stimulate the recovery of the German economy. In response, the Soviets, who were in no hurry to see the German economy recover, ordered a currency reform of their own for the Soviet zone and for Berlin, which happened to be surrounded by the Soviet zone and thus, the Soviets made believe, to lie within their exclusive jurisdiction. The same day, the three Western commandants on the *Kommandatura* declared that the currency reform for the Western-occupied zones was to include the three Western-occupied sectors of Berlin. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union withdrew from the *Kommandatura*, and began a blockade of Berlin's Western sectors, cutting off road, rail, and water communications between Berlin and the Western-occupied zones of Germany. The Allies responded with the famous airlift—Tegel Airport, now the major commercial airport in West Berlin, was built in record time to ease the traffic at the existing airport, Tempelhof—and the Soviets removed the blockade in May 1949.

Also that May, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was founded; the founding of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) followed that October, in East Berlin. The bickering over Berlin grew more intense and more subtle. Each of the new German nations included in its constitution its exclusive claim to Berlin, and each of course wound up effectively getting half of what it claimed. According to the higher power of international law, which is entitled to override German constitutional law, the four Allied powers retained their status in Berlin as occupying forces, and they continue to do so. In order to ensure West Berlin's protection under international law, the Western Allies suspended the Federal Republic's constitutional claim that Berlin was one of its states; however, West Berlin did become a virtual part of the Federal Republic, just as East Berlin did of the Democratic Republic. Although each side continued to voice its claims to the other half of the city, neither was willing to press these claims with significant action. When insurrection flared in East Berlin and other East German cities in 1953, the Soviets put down the revolt, and the West did not intervene. In 1958 Khrushchev demanded that the Western Allies leave Berlin and recognize it as the capital of the GDR. But the West refused, and Khrushchev seemed to get over his crankiness.

YET Berlin remained a profound irritation to the Soviet overlords. As Berlin continued to be an open city, with free passage between East and West, it was a costly breach in the Soviet empire's system of fortification, which was employed as much to keep its inhabitants in as to keep invaders out. From the founding of the GDR until the erection of the Wall, three-and-a-half million East Germans—20 percent of that nation's population—were to head West, a vast majority of them using Berlin as their exit and entryway. So severe a loss could not be tolerated. Khrushchev was compelled to reiterate his demands, in a slightly different form.

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In June 1961 he informed President Kennedy that the Soviet Union would sign a separate treaty with the GDR, and grant it sole sovereignty over Berlin. Kennedy replied that sovereignty over Berlin was neither the Soviet Union's to grant nor the GDR's to accept. Berlin, Kennedy averred, remained under the control of the four sometime Allies, and the Western Allies would not be driven out; they would stand fast in their commitment to defend the right of Berliners "to choose their way of life."

On August 13, 1961, in order to halt "the hostile activities of the revanchist and militarist forces of Western Germany and West Berlin"—which is to say, in order to halt the flow of East Germans heading West, 16,500 of them having made their escape during the first twelve days of that month—Walter Ulbricht, the GDR chieftain, ordered that the Wall be built. The man whom he appointed to oversee its construction was Erich Honecker. The assignment was obviously a real plum. From this distinguished service of his in the public-works line, Honecker went on to become the chieftain himself. The Wall's original incarnation was a makeshift construction of concrete posts and barbed wire; work on the Wall we know, the one built to last, began several days later.

On August 19, Vice President Lyndon Johnson gave a speech in Berlin, and reasserted America's devotion to Berlin's survival and "creative future," pledging "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." On August 23, the GDR reasserted its claims to sovereignty over the western sectors of the city by opening offices in various railway stations there to issue visitors' passes to East Berlin. The *Kommandatura* ordered West Berlin police to close those offices. The GDR, not to be outdone, proceeded to close East Berlin to West Berliners. When the Soviet Union tried to close East Berlin to Allied personnel as well, President Kennedy called in additional troops, and in October our tanks faced theirs across the Wall.

Neither side opened fire, of course, and things cooled down. Students from the Free University in West Berlin—which had been founded in 1948, in disgust with the ideological perversion of the once great Humboldt University in the Soviet sector—sent President Kennedy an umbrella, like the one Neville Chamberlain carried on his way to meet Hitler in Munich in 1938. The bitter gesture was certainly understandable but nevertheless uncomprehending. It was not Kennedy who had feared the rain in 1945 or in the years just after World War II, when the last real opportunity existed to secure the freedom of Berlin, and indeed of Central and Eastern Europe.

Over the course of the past twenty-five years, the city's division has effectively become a settled issue, another loss for the West. However, diplomacy has managed to mitigate some of the harsher effects of this division, and Berliners have learned to be grateful for small triumphs. The most notable of these was the Quadripartite Agreement of 1972. It reaffirmed the legality of the Allies' presence in Berlin; it reestablished telephone connections between the two halves of the city, which had been broken since 1952; and it made it possible for West Berliners to make day trips to East Berlin on a regular basis. (There had been a few special holiday easements of the travel prohibition in the previous years.) To a city where the Wall has divided so many families and separated so many friends, these measures were cause for rejoicing.

Yet even when the West has gained a small triumph, there is no assurance that it will keep what it has managed to get. For the West triumphs only when the East grants concessions, and the East can always take back what it has given. In a clear violation of the Quadripartite Agreement, the East Germans have raised the amount of currency visitors are required to exchange on a day trip from five marks to twenty-five. The sum exchanged is non-refundable, and the exchange rate is an extortionate one to one, or ten times the actual value of the East German mark. The number of visits has declined accordingly.

So diplomacy in Berlin is regularly employed, not only as a balm, but also as an irritant. We irritate them by holding to the rules—and, worse still, by trying to hold them to the rules—and they irritate us by simply flouting the rules when it suits them. It large part, our standing on legality amounts to a semantic fussing that leaves the facts of the matter utterly unchanged. Although the Quadripartite Agreement takes pains to avoid calling East Berlin the capital of the GDR, East Berlin serves as the capital all the same. Although the United States has an embassy in East Berlin, we do not call this our embassy in the GDR, but our embassy to the GDR in Berlin. The other NATO countries follow suit, except for Canada, which is more scrupulous still and has no embassy in or to the GDR; matters to do with the GDR are referred to the Canadian embassy in Poland.

The GDR goes about giving offense rather more robustly than we do. Last May, the East Germans sent the various embassies in West Berlin a diplomatic note which declared that there would soon be some changes made in the regulations governing passage between West and East Berlin. The note did not specify what these changes might be. The Western Allied powers, wanting to find out whether the East Germans might have any changes in mind particularly for them, sent a platoon of diplomats into the breach early one morning. Each diplomat presented either a flag card, or a diplomatic passport, or a tourist passport. This reconnaissance party entered unchallenged and returned without casualties. Soon afterward, however, the East Germans insisted that diplomats of all nations except the

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three Western Allied powers were now required to present passports at the frontier. Certain Western diplomats refused to do so, and they were turned back. About two weeks later, the East Germans realized that the diplomatic forces of the other Western nations were not going to give in to their demands, and they restored the legal crossing procedures. Even their offensiveness has its limits.

Another of their capers threatened to prove more successful, until very recently. It too was a trial of Western patience and resolve, and it had been concocted with uncommon ingenuity and probably a smirk. The Soviet airline, Aeroflot, and the East German one, Interflug, conducted an extensive advertising campaign in the Third World to entice people to emigrate and to seek political asylum in West Berlin. Iranians, Indians, Turks, Lebanese flew into East Berlin, received instructions on applying for political refugee status in West Berlin, and headed on over. (The three Lebanese men whom West Berlin police arrested in August on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack on American installations had entered town just this way.) The Federal Republic of Germany allows virtually anyone to apply for political asylum, and over 40,000 people have done so this year.

Processing the application of a political refugee who enters the FRG through West Berlin can take as long as four years.

The West German predicament must have been a source of delight for the Soviets and the East Germans. One of their fondest wishes is to see the West renounce its insistence that Berlin is still by law an open city. With this immigration scheme, they were doing their best to bring us around to their way of thinking—to compel us to designate the Wall an international frontier. The advantage was theirs, and they seemed to be pressing it. The West German government had already taken measures to restrict the intake of refugees when the East Germans agreed in September to put a stop to the traffic at their end; their capabilities in this respect are beyond reproach. What prompted them suddenly to become so obliging was the desire for improved trade agreements. Once again the West enjoyed a kind of triumph. Still, it is bitterly sad to think that affairs like this are the sorts of things—those that must be done to prevent utter defeat when our own chance for victory is long past, and the enemy is secure in its stronghold—that remain for our diplomatic intelligences to contend with.

There appear to be other things as well. My friend and I had penetrated about twenty yards into East Berlin when he looked at the rear-view mirror and remarked that a car full of Soviet soldiers had pulled out behind us. My friend slowed down to see if they would pass us. They did not. He speeded up. They did, too. My friend, who is not easily flustered, was getting edgy. I knew just what he meant. He drove on for a few more blocks, then said, "Here's where we find out what kind of day we're going to have," and made a quick left turn. The soldiers did not follow. Perhaps their presence had been a coincidence. The day seemed to be turning out a good one.

But we had not seen the last of the screws, and our next encounter was not a coincidence. After strolling about the center of town, we returned to my friend's car on Unter den Linden, formerly Berlin's grandest boulevard, and found a policeman with a truncheon-like demeanor standing on the other side of the street. He was unmistakably waiting for us. "*Verboten*. Em-bah-zay. Em-bah-zay. *Raus. Raus.*" My friend nodded, although he had no idea what the problem was. We sat in the car for a time, while he consulted his map. We discussed the policeman's interest in us, and looked over at him now and again. He was clearly a man with a vocation. He had fists that were made to smash faces and a face that was made to smash fists. And while we dawdled, his fury increased. As it did, his face grew more expressive, so that it came to look less like a blunt instrument and more like a large, ripe boil. At length my friend got his bearings, and pulled out onto the boulevard, without really looking first. Six cars swerved six different ways in their efforts to evade destruction. My friend and I glanced over at the policeman. His pustular wrath was threatening to become volcanic. He seemed about ready to vent the full reservoir of his just socialist loathing upon us, snake-bellied CIA desperadoes that we were, purveyors of mayhem to the world. We looked away, demurely, and did not look back. As we drove off, my friend assured me that even if we'd taken a direct hit broadside, our chances of survival would have been good: a number of East German automobiles have bodies that are made of particle board. He also determined that he must have unwittingly parked in a restricted area. I gathered, from the policeman's glowering attentiveness, that it must be especially illegal to park a car with American diplomatic plates in this area, which is just up the block from the Soviet embassy.

THE cars might be made of compressed sawdust, and an occasional lungful of incomparably foul auto exhaust might make you wish you were inhaling sawdust instead; nevertheless, you have to go to East Berlin to appreciate how grand the imperial city must once have been. Most of the imposing remnants of the old city are now on the wrong side of the Wall; the Soviets got the better of us in this, as in the rest of the deal. It must have been a splendid place, if not a beautiful one: there are buildings of an immensity befitting victorious titans, public squares spacious as small dukedoms, avenues intended to display the glory of parading armies in full bloom. (German military parades are forbidden in Berlin by Allied law, but they are held regularly in East

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Berlin, on May Day and other occasions for general rejoicing, such as major anniversaries of the Wall's erection.) It is a city whose magnificence is a celebration of conquest; Frederick the Great, who was responsible for most of the best things, had a capital built that his army could be proud of.

The Soviets and their minions are not entirely unworthy inheritors of this capital, even if Erich Honecker does not spend his leisure composing flute sonatas, as Frederick used to do.

With their taste for the stupendous, for that crushing grandeur which overwhelms you like an avalanche, the Soviets and the East Germans have been faithful, after their fashion, to the character of the imperial city center. They were busy last spring polishing the ancient glories—the great old buildings were bristling with scaffolding—determined that their luster would outshine anything West Berlin might have to offer when the city observes its 750th anniversary next year. Communist regimes, especially the Soviet one, seem to thrive on such occasions of high ceremony. At conducting solemn festivities of self-celebration, they are surely world class. It is the rest of life at which they fail so decisively.

Some of East Berlin's ugly failures take peculiarly familiar forms. The new regime's architectural contributions to the imperial magnificence have been executed in high proletarian style: the Palace of the Republic, where the Congress of Peoples convenes, is just the kind of palace that might be envisioned by a locker-room attendant who has won the lottery. Its notions of solemn majesty derive chiefly from hotel lobbies in Miami and Las Vegas. To crown the public happiness, piped-in German rap music resounds through the enormous central hall. Such imitations of Western ways are plentiful, and tend to be so grotesque as to seem like parodies. The vast tracts of proletarian housing blocks look just like the projects, though on a more ambitious scale: in the workers' paradise, everyone can live the way they do in American slums.

As in American slums, or for that matter in West Berlin, the contemporary urban folk art of wall painting is in vogue. The eastern face of the Wall, however, is graffiti-free. In the interest of public beautification and moral safety, graffiti are strictly state-commissioned—perhaps there is a Ministry of Public Defacement—and executed on designated sites by members of an artists' union. On a corrugated metal fence near Hitler's bunker, which is being excavated, jolly zig-zags in tropical fruit colors disport themselves, with the state's approval. A mural on a similar fence around a construction site depicts the struggle of the world's oppressed peoples for freedom and peace. Just across the street is another, taller wall, of concrete; it is there to protect the citizenry from the oppression that lurks on the other side.

Actually, to get a taste of the lurking oppression, one would have to make his way first over this wall, then across the River Spree, which is wider there than in most places, and after that over the Wall itself. This lesser wall is imposing in its own right, and it too had been made handsome for the upcoming celebration. The wall used to be a uniform dark gray, my friend observed; now each section of the wall is painted in two shades of gray, so that a rectangular frame of the dark gray encloses, and contrasts winsomely with, an interior panel of light gray. It is a sort of state-sponsored gentrification. The prison-city has been dolling itself up, and pretending it is a drawing room. It is not merely the want of a view there that has spoiled the desired effect.

THE desired effect—respectability, the appearance of decency—is a difficult thing for East Berlin to achieve. It goes against the regime's true instincts. On the western side of the Wall near the Reichstag, where graffiti abound, someone has written, in German, "Down with the Red-Nazi regime." No insult could be more galling to the East Germans, who celebrate relentlessly the great socialist victory over fascism. Yet East Berlin's Memorial to the Victims of Fascist Militarism is unquestionably a shrine to the might of Red-Nazism. (The Jews get no special mention there, by the way, or indeed any mention at all.)

What the new German socialists purport to abhor and to repudiate, they in fact revere and emulate. The changing of the guard at the Memorial is notorious for its vivid evocation of the Third Reich's martial glories. The guardsmen, tall, proud, and fierce, goose-step in precise formation. Even the cut of their uniforms, the shape of their helmets, are familiar. Some of the faces, too, one has seen before. The soldier we saw directing the changing of the guard was blond and handsome and German-looking in just that way which makes Germanic blond handsomeness seem a symptom of psychopathology. He was a picture-book Nazi, his face a caricature of hate-forged ruthlessness. It was simply not possible to look at that young soldier without fear and disgust.

And it was not possible to look at one of his fellow soldiers standing guard there without pity and grief. For as I was examining his face, fixed in that severity which the task commanded, the unthinkable happened, and he broke into a smile. Following his gaze, I looked over at a young woman who was standing a few feet away from me, and it was obvious that her smile had triggered the soldier's. At first I thought this pursed smile of hers was an ironic one, directed at the whole vicious spectacle, but then it seemed that the tightness of her smile, which made her cheeks quiver, was designed to keep her from exploding with laughter. Perhaps she was the soldier's sweetheart or friend or sister, and one look was all that was needed to set the two of them off, like a cou-

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ple of kids who glance at each other in church and immediately turn epileptic with hilarity, disgracing their parents forever. In this case, the young soldier got hold of himself; facial discipline was restored, and permanent disgrace to the fatherland was averted. Still, I had managed to spy the subversive grin, and it was touching to see.

When I read in the Chicago newspapers sometime in July about the unsuccessful attempt by a dozen East German soldiers to commandeer an empty subway train and make their way down an abandoned line into West Berlin—half of them were reported to have been killed in a firefight, the rest executed later—it was this young soldier I thought of. I knew he could not have been among them, for the attempted breakout was said to have taken place in early May, although word of it had not reached the West until two months later. And for all I know, the smiling soldier might be as devoted to his nation's regime as the laser-eyed maniac. Still, I thought of him, his lapse into humanity, which had been heartening for a moment, then heartbreaking. Cracks may appear in the monolith, but the monolith quickly repairs itself. Escape is a rarity; brutality prevails, and its grip is iron. One especially cherishes the glimpse of humanity one gets where one least expects to see it, but the ultimate effect of such a glimpse is to make one feel all the more sharply the pathos of suffocated life.

THERE is a wearying sadness that a tourist in Berlin feels, the sadness of being in a former center of civilization which now—even though one-half of the city is once again an eminently civilized place—bears the indelible mark of barbarism. Worst of all is the thought that one barbaric regime has succeeded another, and that the current tyranny of the Red-Nazi regime might seem not an unjust punishment for what came before. The Thousand Year Reich lasted scarcely more than a decade, but its taint lingers, and will linger long, with an awful pungency.

The city still literally shows the scars of its Nazi past. The façades of public buildings, most notably in East Berlin, have been pocked by gunfire. Near the Pergamon Museum, the broken walls of a palatial ruin, immense and craggy, loom like icebergs. Some of these scars Berlin displays deliberately, as penance and admonition. My first night in Berlin, while we were strolling down the Kurfürstendamm, West Berlin's Michigan or Fifth Avenue, I was amazed to see the ruin of a great cathedral. This massive shard of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, which was shattered by Allied bombing, has been left standing, amid the chic stores and cafés that testify to the city's current prosperity, in order to testify to the destructive forces unleashed by Nazism.

Elsewhere in West Berlin, some of the proudest Nazi monuments still stand unbroken: the Tempelhof airport terminal, which looks like an enormous fortress and was once the largest building in the world; the Olympic stadium, a colosseum insufficiently colossal to suit Hitler, who planned a replacement that would hold nearly a half-million spectators, a virtual city of ecstatic worshippers. From that purely imaginary wonder of the modern world one can trace the descent of the city's current architectural showpiece, that vision perfectly realized in concrete, rather drab and hardly towering, but, like so many great works of the modern imagination, eloquent in its impenetrability. Studying such lines of descent is of course the province, not of architectural history, but of demonology. For in the face of Berlin one reads a terrible modern fable that can best be recounted in these antiquated terms; it is the story of the exorcism of one demon performed by another, which, having cleared out the premises, proceeded to make itself at home.

It is these 20th-century demons that have made Berlin, in a peculiar way, the most strikingly modern of cities. There are certainly many other cities far newer than Berlin, some indeed so new that they really have no history to speak of. Yet Berlin's modernity is so impressive precisely because it has asserted its dominance over an ancient and storied past. The history of Berlin's last fifty years possesses a unique overmastering forcefulness, which has utterly overwhelmed its more distant history. Berlin is the capital of modern cruelty; and as political barbarism has become the salient feature of life in this century, its inhumanity unrivaled by any earlier epoch, one can think of Berlin as peerless in its modernity.

Other cities are intimate with the two principal varieties of modern savagery—Moscow, Warsaw, Riga, Vilnius (the Jewish Vilna), Budapest, Prague—but Berlin alone has both ruled one inhuman empire and suffered as an outpost of the other. Thus the demonic presence there is of singular potency. It has nothing like this strength in the other great fascist capital, Rome—in part because Mussolini's regime was not succeeded by another similarly monstrous; in part because the ancient Roman glory that Italian Fascism revered has remained the preeminent presence. In Rome, when you see SPQR ("The Senate and People of Rome") embossed on a manhole cover, you think of some Caesar or other, although you might do so with a laugh; in Berlin, when you see the bear on the city's ancient crest, you think of Stalin or Khrushchev, and you wince.

Those epochs of Berlin's pre-Nazi history which modern barbarism has not bulldozed into oblivion, it has refashioned after its own image, so that upon examination the distant past seems to foreshadow the horrors of the 20th century. The East German regime's sensitivity about Nazism and its reputed precursors has a grim comedy to it. Only in 1980 did it replace the equestrian statue of Frederick the Great, removed by the Soviets, atop

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its commanding perch at the head of Unter den Linden, very near the Memorial to the Victims of Fascist Militarism. Goose-stepping brutes in jackboots were a fitting tribute to socialist peaceableness, but the emperor on horseback, that legendary proto-fascist, was an unendurable embarrassment.

Now the regime feels differently about Frederick. A current exhibition at his magnificent palace in Potsdam, a few miles from Berlin, celebrates his achievements. He has been rehabilitated and pressed into the service of a resurgent Prussian nationalism. New lines of descent are being established for the heroes of the GDR, much as they were during World War II for the heroes of the Soviet Union, when Stalin, knowing it might be difficult to rally his subjects (whose ranks he had already decimated by means of manufactured famine, deadly slave labor, and more conventional forms of murder) around the hammer and sickle, inspired them instead by invoking the ancient military glories of Mother Russia. So now the guardsmen at the Memorial to the Victims of Fascist Militarism can think with pride of the distinguished native military tradition that they represent. A novel socialist outlook on old history has dispersed some of the ghastliness that had enveloped bygone German glories.

THIS ghastliness, both in its modern forms and in the old ones that have come to seem ahead of their time, haunts the visitor; it follows him everywhere. At a concert of the Berlin Philharmonic, I was diverted from the music by my curiosity about what it meant to members of the orchestra to be playing, or to members of the audience to be hearing, Mahler conducted by James Levine. At the excellent art gallery of West Berlin's Dahlem Museum, I looked hard at Rembrandts and Holbeins, but I lingered longest over a panel of an altarpiece by a 15th-century painter I'd never heard of, Hans Multscher. As Jesus lugs his cross toward Calvary, pudgy urchins pelt him with stones or jeeringly bare their genitals, and, amid the crowd of onlookers, some of whom are horrified but most of whom are rapt with delight, a fat hag with a hooked nose wears a grin like a scimitar. At first this anti-Semitic touch, the grinning Jewish ogress, seemed the most important thing about the painting. Yet as I looked longer, that detail acquired a different significance, and what held me was the painter's understanding of the way in which perfectly ordinary men perform unspeakable cruelties, his matter-of-fact rendering of horrific bestiality as a common human characteristic. For the stone-throwing youths were plainly fine, stout German lads. A devout hater of Jews could certainly find in this painting the traditional iconography of his chosen loathing; yet if he were to look more carefully, he would not fail to find his own kind among the Christ-killers. The effect was masterfully achieved, and not to be forgotten.

After seeing the painting, I found myself maintaining a perverse vigilance on the city streets that day, peering keenly into the faces of passersby, with an eye out for the monstrosity latent in the ordinary Berliner. My watchfulness, however, was less fruitful than it would probably have been in a place like Dayton or Omaha. I uncovered no demonic passions shining darkly; the ordinary faces seemed to have nothing out of the ordinary to disclose. Of course I don't know how many Berliners might have caught a glimpse of me and wondered what sort of emotional disturbance was behind that fevered look of mine, that strange searching intensity. But they are probably used to tourists.

Even as Berlin seems to activate a predilection for morbidity in the visitor, to sharpen his awareness of human beastliness and suffering, it makes him feel this rawness of the nerves to be something outlandish—and furthermore, *ausländisch*, literally alien. It is soon plain that being in Berlin simply does not torment Berliners as it does him. In fact they hardly seem to mind at all, and, to the visitor in his exacerbated state, this general unconcern might seem to be insensibility. As my friend had told me, Berliners do seem to live in Berlin pretty much as people do anywhere else. And they do give the appearance of being demon-free. If you were to administer a word-association test to a visitor in Berlin and to a native Berliner, asking them both what the word *Grünewald* meant to them, one would instinctively think of the most lurid crucifixion ever painted, and the other of the lovely belt of woodland that runs through the city.

In West Berlin, a composed and commodious urbanity flourishes. West Berlin is civilized as one fears no major American city can ever hope to be, and as even that long-time paragon of civility, London, can no longer call itself. You can stroll fearlessly at dusk along narrow paths in the thickly wooded Tiergarten, which in New York or Chicago or Rome would be a Raubtiergarten, paradise for bushwhackers and hell on anyone else. The U-bahn is not only clean and safe but downright congenial. Some aspects of this civility take some getting used to; the American tourist in particular needs reminding that certain minor acts of lawbreaking he indulges in as a matter of course are looked upon unfavorably. You don't jaywalk or cross against the light; pedestrian legions dutifully unmoving on the streetcorner eye you scornfully if you do. You don't bash your way into tight parking spaces; it is a Berliner's nature to resort to law immediately upon your touching his car with your own. Such strict decorum might sound confining; in fact, it is, a bit. Still, there is a danger you might acquire a taste for this kind of thing. Neither boom boxes nor police sirens nor lunatic ravings rend the air. Indeed, you feel confident that even public lunacy

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would be a quiet and decorous thing there, these days; if you were actually to meet a screaming madman at large, he would probably turn out to be a visitor from New York, whom the insufferable civility had unhinged.

PUBLIC order and tranquility are the rule in West Berlin, but by no means do they rule out fun. West Berlin's hedonism is of the standard late 20th-century sort. It is a far cry from the desperate licentiousness that one associates with the Berlin of the Weimar republic, ravenously bolting down its pleasures with a fearful relish, as at an orgy conducted in the shadow of deprivation. Nowadays, in the shadow of deprivation, West Berliners seem placidly to regard a certain regular pleasure-dosage as their due, the way people might in Malibu, for instance.

The week I was in West Berlin, it even looked a bit like Malibu. A windsurfing regatta was being held on the Wannsee, a picturesque lake that is a popular spot for weekend outings. The profusion of sailboards atop car roofs gave the city that somewhat raffish air of seagoing festivity that is the hallmark of the beach resort. A bumper sticker on a van with Berlin license plates and a sailboard on top advertised surfing holidays. Not far from the splendid house where the Nazi leadership had convened the Wannsee Conference in order to perfect the Final Solution, windsurfers now convened in order to zip joyfully across the blue waters.

Of course, this innocent sportiveness does not sweep aside the pall of demonic memory, but rather acquires a poignancy from its lingering presence. At the Olympic stadium, which is quite a tourist attraction, my friend and I felt keenly the horror of the place, this altar to the matchless strength and splendor of the Teutonic body; yet my friend also told me how he was looking forward to attending a top-drawer track meet that was going to be held there in several weeks, and I was rather sorry that I wasn't going to be around for it. Especially in a place like this, one cannot but savor the sweetness of peaceable democratic life, with its toothsome abundance of inconsequential pleasures; however, neither can one forget, in such a place, that the great democracies' taste for life's sweetness has caused them more than once to recoil from its most bitter necessities, and has been responsible in no small part for the most tragic events of our terrible century.

Still, life is good in West Berlin. The pleasures that Tocqueville foresaw as rising to preeminence in democracies, those of physical well-being, are attended to devoutly there. Sport, or at least watching sport, ranks high among these pleasures; sex, or at least watching sex, presumably ranks higher still, for most people; yet neither of these, one suspects, is supreme. The key to determining the hierarchy of bodily pleasures lies in the monumental departure store KaDeWe, which devotes its entire top floor to food. This pricey cornucopia is crammed, to borrow A.J. Liebling's delectable phrase, with lots of the best of everything. Eating well might not, on its own, be the best revenge, but it does contribute mightily to such vengeance. The cafés on the Kurfürstendamm are packed on a Friday evening. Restaurants tend to pile food high, and patrons to put it down in a pleasurable hurry. Italian restaurants are especially notable for their number and their quality. Many of them are owned and staffed by Sicilian families who are in no hurry to go back home. One Sicilian waiter proudly told us that he often serves American diplomats stationed in East Berlin, who come over in need of a good meal.

Although belly-pleasures might enjoy premier rank, the pleasures of mind and spirit are not without their place in West Berlin. The symphony and the opera are excellent. Painting, too, is said to thrive; what I regret most about my stay is that I did not have a look at some of the galleries featuring contemporary works by Berlin artists. Yet the chief intellectual and spiritual pleasures of democratic life lie, not in making or contemplating works of art, but in forming and promoting one's opinions; and such pleasures tend to be most exquisite when one's opinions have to do with the indecency of democracy.

Although one might expect that being foolish in the usual ways would be rather more difficult in West Berlin than elsewhere, in fact outspoken inanity is easy enough to come by. On the wall of a building that houses a bookstore in Kreuzberg, a large banner declares, in German: PEOPLES NEED PEACE. U.S. OUT OF NICARAGUA. A sign in the bookstore window announces that Nicaraguan coffee is sold within. There, three blocks from the Wall, persons sufficiently astute to overlook the vulgarly obvious and to peer into the very heart of the matter can gather, in an atmosphere enriched by the fragrance of this peaceable bean, to esteem the truly estimable and to loathe the truly loathsome. For decency's sake, one feels obliged to entertain the hope that the bookstore is really a CIA cover. The odds are not good, however.

Evidence suggests that the local chapter of the irreproachably moral is seeing to it that West Berliners be made to know that their side of town is no better than the other, and that the American presence in particular be made to consider daily its dark and bloody history. The Free University has placed the Salvador Allende Memorial Dormitory directly across from the main American military compound. (The dorm got into the news earlier this year when a former resident, a so-called diplomat from Libya, was murdered in East Berlin.) Near the opera house, the injunction NICHTS EUROSHIMA splashed on a wall similarly serves as reminder and warning: never again. One wonders what became of the students who sent Kennedy that umbrella; they seem positively sagacious compared with the current run of chumps.

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DURING my stay in Berlin I chatted with Sicilian waiters, French soldiers, and French, British, and American diplomats, but I did not have a single conversation with a real Berliner—did not get the chance to hear what it is like to call Berlin home, or to explain to a native what it is like to be a tourist in his hometown. After I had been back in Chicago for several weeks, however, I got the chance to remedy this deficiency, after a fashion, when *Harper's* published an essay on Berlin by the novelist Peter Schneider, "Up Against It," on the occasion of the Wall's 25th anniversary. Schneider's essay addresses precisely the question that interested me the most as I went about my tourist's business in his city: what is the difference between an outsider's understanding of this strange place he has come to have a look at and a Berliner's understanding of this strange place he calls home?

TOURISTEN RAUS? No, but TOURISTEN ACHTUNG! "Does the tourist's quasi-obligatory visit to the Wall provide him with the experience of the original?" Almost certainly not, for the Wall's true nature is apparent only to those who, in looking upon it, do not see it at all, treat it as though it weren't there. "Perhaps the Berliner's refusal to take any notice of the Wall is a realistic appraisal: after twenty-five years, the Wall, like the God of the Old Testament, is in truth invisible and not named. It functions largely as a symbol of the spiritual condition that for the time being is called *Wahnsinn*." *Wahnsinn* means madness, and Schneider explains that, during the past several years in Berlin, the word has acquired a fashionable new usage: in speaking of something as *Wahnsinn*, one enjoys "a special kind of pleasure accessible only to cognoscenti, some new kind of high." Berlin is the "natural home" of this superior and pleasurable understanding, "a spiritual condition beyond good and evil," in which one perceives with relentless clarity the madness of modern political life, a madness that Communism and democracy partake in equally.

Berlin's status as the symbolic focus of the conflict between Communism and democracy has endowed Berliners, according to Schneider, with special powers of discernment which enable them to recognize both systems as propagators of *Wahnsinn*. "There is no fertile soil in Berlin for planting the idea that the social system on the other side of the Wall represents the empire of evil." What Schneider goes on to emphasize, however, is that West Berliners are sufficiently wise to know the East is not really bad, and East Berliners sufficiently wise to know the West is really not good. It is ignorant presumption for Westerners to think that Easterners long for the freedom that democracy offers. (In any case, those rare Easterners who flee to the West find something very peculiar, and perhaps turn peculiar themselves. Schneider cites the unfortunate cases of three men he knows who, in escaping to the West, plunged themselves into degradation, perversion, or outright craziness.) The Wall, Schneider concludes, is really no longer necessary, for the enforced confinement of the past twenty-five years has succeeded in turning East Germans into living models of socialist man. If the Wall were dismantled today, it would become clear that "what has developed is not two states but two ways of life, two different value systems. Only then could a genuine contest be carried out, point for point, to determine which state has done what better. . . ."

Of course, if the Communist enterprise had been the success Schneider claims it is, the Kremlin would have already ordered the Wall taken down—would have ordered all the walls down, no doubt in a magnificent rite of triumphant exultation. For nothing would better serve the cause than the spectacle of the Eastern multitudes—so commonly thought to be held captive in their homelands, so commonly thought to ache for democratic freedom—freely spurning the West's whorish enticements and clinging faithfully to the unexampled happiness of Marxist-Leninist domesticity. Perhaps, following this logic, the real reason the Wall stays up is the Soviet Union's fear that if it comes down, the East would be overrun with Western emigrants clamoring that they, too, have a right to know the greatest human joys.

The Wall, however, will go on standing for a very long time. It will go on standing for the same reason it was built in the first place: the East German regime, and its Soviet masters, need it there. The Wall, and all the walls of the Soviet empire, are indispensable to the war that Soviet Communism continues to wage against its own subjects—more precisely, against the refractory humanity of its subjects, which refuses the inhuman form that Communist mastery seeks to impose on it. The very fact of the Wall's existence proves that there is but a single matter in which the East has excelled: the conduct of war. If they weren't superior in that, they could not have built the Wall or kept it standing; if they were superior in anything else, they would not have built it or be keeping it standing.

THE obvious inanity of opinions like Schneider's only deepens the sadness with which a tourist regards Berlin. Elsewhere, such foolishness would still be foolishness, but there intellectual failure of this order seems an act of unforgivable moral turpitude. For the cruelest thought one suffers from in Berlin—it is a thought that is forced upon one, over and over—is that our century could have been spared its most horrible sufferings had decent men only seen clearly and done in time what had to be done. There is a tradition in 20th-century democratic thought of failing to recognize the monstrosity of the monstrous, and that intellectual failure of the democracies has contributed decisively to the signal moral failure of our age, and indeed of hu-

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man history: the failure of decent men to extinguish the monstrous before it could work its irremediable evil.

Although such views as Schneider's stand out with eye-catching prominence against their background, they are not the prevailing views in West Berlin. A robust and sensible public voice makes itself heard above the nitwit yammering. The Wall's presence, in its blunt viciousness, permits, even demands—or more important, one might say, demands, and even permits—a public language of uncommon candor and clarity. The public language in East Berlin, of course, is one of belligerent mendacity, based as it is upon the principle—a familiar one in Berlin—that the more audacious and magniloquent the lie, the more likely it will rule unchallenged: the Wall is the "anti-fascist barricade"; the crime of assisting East Germans to escape East Germany is dealing in "subversive slave traffic."

In the face of such sneering falsehood, West Berlin is given to a plainspoken sternness, which is heard in the newspapers, in the speeches of public officials, sometimes even in the signs in public parks. The East-West border cuts the Glienecke Bridge, known as *die Brücke der Einheit*, the Unity Bridge, in half; the bridge is closed except to authorized teams of military observers who are permitted to scout enemy territory. (It was over this bridge that Anatoly Shcharansky was released to the West.) A sign on the Western side of the bridge, in a beautiful park that is favored by Sunday strollers, reads "Remember that those who named this bridge 'The Bridge of Unity' are also the ones who erected walls, strung barbed wire, and established death-zones to divide East from West." It is difficult to think of an official American utterance to equal this for penetration and eloquent forthrightness, unless it is "evil empire." West Berlin does depart now and again from this abrasive honesty, and adopts a more conciliatory tone in order to lubricate some deal or other between the two Germanys. Nevertheless, my diplomatic friend assures me, most people in West Berlin, not to mention a considerable number in East Berlin, know very well on which side of the Wall the evil empire stands.

However, it does seem that West Berliners prefer not to spend much time looking off in that direction. The observation platforms on the Western side of the Wall once numbered about 300, roughly one for every watchtower on the other side; now there are only about 100 platforms still standing. Evidently, use of the platforms fell to the point where the cost of maintaining them all could no longer be justified. It is difficult to organize a mass demonstration of political sentiments in West Berlin. To observe the Wall's 25th anniversary, plans were made to form a human chain running the full length of the Wall, over a hundred miles, and encircling West Berlin; maybe 1,500 people turned up.

To rouse public passion as the anniversary approached, an East Berliner who had recently escaped to West Berlin told the press a remarkable getaway story: he had painted his car to resemble a Soviet military patrol car, obtained Soviet uniforms from helpful Westerners, dressed himself and a few mannequins as Soviet soldiers, and driven through Checkpoint Charlie. The story was a fake; the truth he judged insufficiently sensational to cause the desired stir. (He did succeed in turning a nice profit on the hoax, selling his story to a British television station.) The story of the twelve East German soldiers who were thwarted in their daring subway-hijack attempt was very likely a fabrication as well, my friend has told me. These storytellers must have hoped that, by injecting the populace with a strong enough dose of heroic fantasy, they could render the invisible Wall visible again.

Common sense gives one a strong suspicion as to the reason for the Wall's invisibility to Berliners, and what I saw on my last night in Berlin confirmed the suspicion that I'd had almost from the start. That night, at the opera in West Berlin, I saw a performance of *Fidelio* that was one of the most moving artistic performances I have ever seen. Beethoven's opera is a work of the rarest nobility and beauty, and the production was in every respect a fine one; but what gave the performance its truly unforgettable power was the way Beethoven's art pierced to the very souls of the audience and bared the profound emotion that the demands of living an ordinary life in this extraordinary place customarily force out of sight.

During the finale of the first act, when the chorus of prisoners, let out into the sun for a moment, sang its superb hymn to freedom, the feeble voices of men who were all broken slowly gathering strength until they rang out clear and full and ardent, "*Nur hier, nur hier ist Leben*"—only here, only here is there life—the audience drank in this song with a ferocious need. Around me people wiped away tears, even choked back sobs. I, too, began to cry.

Throughout the second act, I could see in the tensed forms of those seated around me that they were clenching their griefs tightly to themselves, careful not to let them spill again. Yet the tears forced their way out once more, during the opera's finale.

When Don Fernando announced that he had arrived to end the "*Frevel Nacht*," the night of outrage that was Pizarro's tyranny, and the chorus of prisoners now joined by townspeople sang out, "*Heil sei dem Tag*," hail to the day, the house lights came on, and some time before the opera's end, bathing the audience in freedom's daybreak. The woman seated beside me dabbed at her eyes repeatedly, brushing her tears away as fast as they came. The shoulders of a man a couple of rows

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ahead shook several times, then suddenly stopped shaking. Someone behind me gave out a sigh.

What exactly these people, or any of the others there, might have been crying for, I can't say, for their tears took in fifty years of grief, the most grievous fifty years men have ever known, when many were inhuman in the name of a purer humanity, and many others turned away in fear from the sight of their monstrosities, and even the virtue of those sufficiently strong to fight these evils was really not good enough. No doubt this *Fidelio* touched many personal griefs and losses; no doubt it made many people grateful that they had been spared crueler losses, deeper griefs; and no doubt, too, it made them mindful of those who had suffered the worst, under the Nazi empire of which their city had been the heart, and under the Soviet empire which now surrounded them. All these feelings, in proportions that varied from one person to the next, were bound together in the public grief, of which I now had a glimpse; and added to them was the disturbing emotion inspired by Leonore's heroic perseverance and her ultimate triumph, an emotion oscillating between thankfulness for the sublime imagination that gave such virtue such a reward and bitterness at the crueler actuality that has massed evil upon evil against a decency slender and worn.

THERE is no shortage of reasons for sorrow in Berlin, but vitality will not tolerate an untiring grief. The current vigorous normality of life in West Berlin is a measure of the inhabitants' disregard for the most striking things about the place, which happen to be the saddest and the most terrible. If the Wall is invisible to Berliners, it is not because some privileged spiritual condition beyond good and evil empowers them to see through it. Rather, it is because the Wall's stark brutality, its patent and ever-present evil, against which they are helpless, has compelled them to find refuge in a studied blindness. To see the Wall every day of one's life —really to see it, as clearly as if one were seeing it for the first time—would be more than most people could bear. In Berlin, to live constantly in full awareness of where you were would require nothing less than heroic fortitude. In West Berlin, such uncompromising attentiveness would be especially difficult to maintain, for diversion from it offers itself so readily, so agreeably.

No doubt there are Berliners with the strength of mind necessary for so trying a life. Apart from those few, however, perhaps it is the tourist who can best appreciate the Wall and its native city for what they really are. Perhaps it is easier for someone who is merely passing through, and for whom the history of the place is not so painful a part of himself—like an old wound never quite healed, a sharp fragment of metal still lodged somewhere in the body, delivering a jolt of pain when one makes a particular sudden movement—to make his way around boldly there, and to look without blinking at the things that those who must live in their presence prefer to pass with eyes averted.

Berlin is a place everyone ought to see, and in Berlin one would do best to begin one's sightseeing at the Wall. There should be no real surprises there; you see nothing that you did not expect to see. Still, there is something about the sight: unless your vision is irreparably damaged, the view forces you to see clearly. Such clarity can take you far in Berlin, even if you are a mere tourist. And it is hard to think of a vacation souvenir to match in value this sort of unclouded perception.

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Wagner as Anti-Semite

Samuel Lipman

In the long history of Jewish persecution, anti-Semitism in German-speaking lands occupies a special, and especially horrible, place. It is a curious irony that this position of dishonor was won in a time and place—post-Enlightenment Europe—that seemed to offer Jews the acceptance and assimilation so many of them ardently desired.

As it did elsewhere, anti-Semitism in German-speaking lands had existed for many centuries. Religious intolerance born of the hegemonic drive of Christianity assumed a Catholic form before the Reformation, and a Protestant form afterward as well. The restriction of Jewish economic activity mostly to peddling and moneylending created both a despised and visible underclass on the one hand and a despised and visible upper class on the other. Inconsistent and contradictory legal edicts, sometimes allowing Jews residence, sometimes expelling them, produced a public image of a people permanently living as wanderers.

The Enlightenment, which marked the beginning of the destruction of the old order in general, also brought in its wake the idea of Jewish emancipation. The most demonstrable political result of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution of 1789, projected a new notion of citizenship based not on feudal obligations or membership in an established church but upon birth, residence, and individual acceptance of universal legal norms. Napoleon's wars of conquest brought this secular gospel to much of Europe, but nowhere did these gains prove more illusory than in Germany and Austria. Indeed, it was at the Congress held in Vienna in 1815 that a process began of the restoration not of Jewish rights but rather of Jewish disabilities.

Yet despite the political regression born of an unholy combination of newly excited nationalism and restored dynastic reaction, in intellectual life, at least, the Enlightenment remained a fact all over Europe. For German Jews, the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729-86), canonized in Lessing's famous dramatic poem *Nathan der Weise* (1779), symbolized the secular cultural achievement that was theoretically possible for a Jew who nevertheless remained Jewish.

The history of Jewish life in 19th-century Germany and Austria was to be marked by a failure to work out the contradiction between socio-political reaction and the intellectuals' dream of *Bildung*—that peculiarly German concept which envisages the formation of character and mind through study of the classics of antiquity and of the most exalted philosophy, literature, art, and music of the modern world. One of the most acute, and certainly also one of the most biased and vicious observers of the failure to work out this contradiction was Richard Wagner (1813-83). Through the operas he composed and through his voluminous writings, Wagner devoted his life to trying to give the Germans a mythology worthy of their greatness; he only succeeded in giving them the mythology which carried them first to the very edge of world power and then to what seemed, in the mid-1940's, very much like their downfall.

The history of Wagner's Judeophobia has been remarkably well-documented. His most important, though by no means his only, literary work in this area was *Das Judentum in der Musik* ("Jewishness in Music"), published as a pamphlet in 1850 under the pseudonym K. Freigedank (K. Freethought), and then under his own name in 1869. In addition, there are many hardly incidental passages dealing with the Jews throughout his writings, and many contemporary accounts of his opinions as well, recorded by friends and enemies alike. In the 1970's there appeared a veritable treasure-trove of anti-Semitism in the two volumes of his wife Cosima's diaries. These diaries, a loving transcription of the Master's own words seasoned by her own most tender observations, made clear for all to see that Wagner's anti-Semitism was intended as much for family edification as it was for the great public which increasingly admired his operas and worshipped his person.

Now Jacob Katz, Emeritus Professor of Jewish Educational and Social History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (and sometime Rector of the University) and a great scholar of Jewish life in both medieval and modern Europe, has written a book subjecting Wagner's anti-Semitic arguments to careful summary, analysis, and historical interpretation.* He asks several fundamental and vitally important questions: what was the nature of the world in which Wagner was active? What did he write? Why did he write as he did? How were his opinions received? How responsible was he for what was done by others following in his footsteps?

In dealing with these questions, Professor Katz attempts a developmental analysis of Wagner's opin-

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ions on the Jewish question, rather than treating those opinions as a fixed quantity throughout the composer's life. He does not at any time work forward from Wagner as a composer of operas to Wagner as a social and political thinker. Moreover, Professor Katz rigorously eschews any backdating from what happened in the 20th century to Wagner's own time. What Wagner wrote he studies in and for itself, rather than through the possibly distorting lenses of later, and perhaps different, figures.

PROFESSOR KATZ quite properly begins his book with a description of the place of the Jews in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century. He finds that the spirit of modernity had seemed to eliminate the basis for the separate existence of Jews. Once legal restrictions were either weakened or eliminated, Jewish separation could no longer be enforced, and those Jews who so desired could in theory have social contacts with Gentiles, provided they were willing to adopt the manners and customs of the majority. The state was becoming increasingly secular, and this development raised, for the Jews, the question of their ability to take part in the secular life of the community, and of what would be required of them in order to do so. Karl Marx saw full Jewish integration as conditioned upon an end to finance capitalism, and with it an end to what he regarded as the specifically Jewish economic role. In any event, no longer was conversion to Christianity a sure route to acceptance, for religion itself was now less important. Indeed, the mere fact of baptism, as in the cases of the composer Felix Mendelssohn (the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn) and the writers Ludwig Börne and Heinrich Heine, did not, so far as the surrounding world was concerned, turn the baptized into non-Jews.

According to Professor Katz, Wagner did not begin his intellectual life as an anti-Semite. He had friendly relations with many Jews during his struggling years as a composer. He worked without hostility as journalist and copyist for the publisher Schlesinger in Paris during the early 1840's. He was both a friend and an admirer of Halévy, the composer of *La Juive* (1835), for whom he did copying chores. He had amicable relations with Heine in Paris, and set the poet's *Die beiden Grenadiere* to music. He had a high opinion of Mendelssohn, until the Leipzig publication *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* ("that organ of Mendelssohn's") ignored his two early operas *Rienzi* (1840) and *Der fliegende Holländer* (1841). He was even willing to truckle to his operatic rival, Giacomo Meyerbeer, without any private expression of anti-Semitic feelings.

Still, Meyerbeer's great success—and also Robert Schumann's comment that *Der fliegende Holländer* "smacks of Meyerbeer"—did stick in Wagner's craw. With the writing of *Das Judentum in der Musik* in 1850, Wagner made an attempt to settle scores, at first with Meyerbeer in particular, and then, so that his position might not seem a matter of envy occasioned by one person only, with the Jews in general. Presenting himself as someone who had never been comfortable with Jews, Wagner drew upon Bruno Bauer for arguments against religion and upon Marx for the idea, and the vocabulary, that what the artists of the past "had wrought with all-consuming efforts, today the Jew turns into an art-commodity exchange." As Wagner saw it, art and culture sprang from the *Volk*, the people, with whom the Jews had no real sympathy or contact (they had access, he said, only to the upper classes). Yet with the decline in German musical creativity after Beethoven, an artistic vacuum was created which the Jews rushed to fill and further corrupt.

Though there was little explicit racialism in *Das Judentum*, Wagner did seem to assume a permanent, fixed Jewish character (the Christianized Mendelssohn he treated as a tragic victim of his own Jewishness). On the other hand, he ended with a call for redemption, which could be achieved if the Jews gave up all aspects of their Jewishness. Indeed, Wagner later saw himself as having done the cause of assimilation a service, for in attacking the Jews he was only making the clearest possible presentation of the difficulties which stood in the way of the only viable solution (expulsion being ruled out as impractical) to the Jewish problem.

Because Wagner had published *Das Judentum* under a pseudonym, the strong reaction it provoked did him little damage. But the writing of this work did produce a change in Wagner's consciousness, increasingly convincing him that the enmity between himself and Jews was, in Professor Katz's words, helping to "determine his fate." When in 1869 Wagner decided to republish *Das Judentum* under his own name, he added a preface and an afterword linking the Jews he had attacked in 1850 with critics and colleagues active in 1869. The fact that he was everywhere becoming more successful made no difference; he still blamed the Jews for trying to ruin him.

THE years immediately following Wagner's republication of *Das Judentum* are described by Professor Katz as a time, for Jews, of "the illusion of emancipation." It was becoming increasingly plain that, despite the hopes of the advocates of emancipation, the Jews (even when they converted to Christianity) did not readily assimilate. It was therefore necessary to find a reason more basic than religion to explain why the Jews, in spite of everything, seemed to remain Jews, and yet also to hold out at least the possibility of change. In a trenchant summation which both blames and partially exculpates Wagner for the mounting attack on the older case for emancipation, Professor Katz writes:

> No matter how deeply rooted the Jewish mentality was considered to be, and no matter how acutely the foreignness of the Jew was perceived, the Jews' opponents did not hold their characteristics to be ineradicable. They held open, in principle, the road to assimilation, designated at the time as "amalgamation." The condition for attaining that goal was the complete abandonment of Jewish character traits—an indefinable process which now took the place of the institutionally fixed act of baptism. It was only

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one more step to a complete negation of the possibility of a transformation of the Jews. In the interests of historical accuracy, it must be established that neither Wagner nor his defenders (with the exception of [the racial anti-Semite Max] Fuchs) took that step during the Wagner controversy.

Professor Katz makes much of the virulent anti-Semitism which Wagner promulgated in the private world of his family, friends, and colleagues. But he also makes clear that the composer was at all times willing and eager to have close Jewish associates. In the case of one such associate, the young pianist Joseph Rubinstein, the relationship was based upon Rubinstein's abasement of his Jewish self before Wagner; in the case of the brilliant and tragically short-lived pianist Karl Tausig, Jewish matters seem hardly to have come up, though Wagner and his wife professed to see the curse of Judaism in Tausig's early death. The brilliant conductor Hermann Levi, the son of a rabbi, was willing to argue with Wagner about Jewish matters, and the composer could never forget that he needed this Jew to conduct the 1882 premiere of the racialist and heretical-Christian *Parsifal*. Wagner concocted a baptism scheme for Levi, which he gave up when the conductor proved unwilling; in Levi's refusal Professor Katz detects a negative symbol of the wider hopes for the Christianizing of the Jews.

AFTER 1875, anti-Semitism was again on the rise in Germany. Wagner once more publicly returned to the attack, writing about Jews for the *Bayreuther Blätter*, the official publication of the Bayreuth Festival. In 1878, he published the article, *Was ist Deutsch* ("What Is German"), originally written privately in 1865 for his patron, King Ludwig of Bavaria; in an addendum to this diagnosis of the destruction of the German spirit by the Jews, he alluded to their influence in the new German empire, a political order which made him uneasy. In the 1881 article *Erkenne dich selbst* ("Know Thyself"), he further suggested removing the conditions that made Jewish emancipation possible by severing the links between Christianity and the Old Testament and between the state and capitalist property relations.

Though among apologists Wagner has received much credit for his refusal in 1880 to sign an anti-Semitic petition circulated by the rabid Judeophobe Bernhard Förster, Professor Katz declines to praise Wagner for what in his view was only a prudential action. His judgment on Wagner in this instance is harsh: "The master did indeed poke the fire, but he let others burn their fingers in it."

At the end of his life Wagner seemed to be seeing the Jews in wholly racialist terms. According to the 1881 article *Heldentum und Christentum* ("Hero-dom and Christendom"), all peoples, except for the Jews, are capable of salvation through Christ (and, one assumes, given the composer's ambitions in *Parsifal*, through Richard Wagner). Though Professor Katz stresses that it was Wagner's opinion of Jewish depravity which led to his racialism, not the other way around, he does hold Wagner responsible for toying with violent solutions, including expulsion and burning, to what he saw as the Jewish problem, and he is ready to assign Wagner some share of the blame for what was to happen later:

> . . . fleeting notions concerning possible action against the Jews are indication enough of the consequences that can follow from the passionate negation of Jewish existence. In this sense Wagner's mentality and way of thinking are indeed an anticipation of future horrors.

In the main, however, Professor Katz finds that Wagner's anti-Semitism had no real racial basis, and that Wagner did not envisage a holocaust when, at the end of *Das Judentum*, he advocated Jewish self-annihilation; what he meant by this term was not the death of the Jews but their redemption through de-Judaization. Similarly, in calling himself a "plenipotentiary of downfall," Wagner was referring not to the Jews but to mankind as a whole. And Professor Katz seems to sympathize with Thomas Mann's remarks, on the 50th anniversary in 1933 of Wagner's death, that the composer's nationalism belonged to its own time and should not be given a contemporary relevance. He does, however, point out that Mann's exculpation of Wagner was itself time-bound—it was, after all, written before World War II and the Holocaust.

Nevertheless, as has already been made clear, Professor Katz is very far from giving Wagner anything like a clean bill of health. Wagner was not in the position of a scientist whose discovery is later used for other than his own, innocent, purposes; Wagner's anti-Semitism was morally dubious in his own time. Even if Wagner never intended to be "a central symbol of the anti-Semitic campaign and later the banner of the campaign for the annihilation of the Jews," he showed, by his public restraint in the interest of furthering his career, that he was aware of what he was doing, and in no sense naive.

Professor Katz closes his book by remarking that in two countries today, for quite different reasons, the art-works of Richard Wagner cannot be considered apart from their extra-artistic associations. In Germany, any attempt to separate the operas from Wagner's political pronouncements must for the foreseeable future run the risk of being taken as an attempt to whitewash those who used Wagner as an honored mentor. In Israel, such a separation is, agair for the foreseeable future, made impossible by the awareness of the role these operas played in Hitler's life and the life of the Third Reich generally. And at the very end, Professor Katz renders a verdict which is condemnatory, but also perhaps in some way curiously limited: "Wagner himself sits in judgment on Wagner and is unable to grant himself a historical acquittal."

JUDGED in terms of its surface content, *The Darker Side of Genius* is quite the best summary and analysis we have had of Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism. Professor Katz nowhere engages in polemics based

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more upon present-day events than upon the historical happenings of a century and more ago; he nowhere indulges in the easy psychologizing which sees the mature Wagner's hatred for the Jews in the alleged suspicion—which in fact Wagner seems never to have entertained—that his real father was Jewish; he nowhere indulges in the understandable tendency to avenge today's victims by reinterpreting the past.

If Professor Katz is properly cautious, he is also properly stern; he clearly has no tolerance for the attempts now being mounted by some scholars—especially in Germany—to downplay Wagner's hatred of the Jews. A particularly valuable feature of his book is the determined effort Professor Katz makes to relate the development of anti-Semitism in the 19th century, and Wagner's role in that development, not just to what the enemies of the Jews said about them, but to what the Jews themselves did, either by way of assimilation or by way of separatism.

His verdict on Wagner seems eminently sound. Wagner was indeed an artist, and not a rigorous philosophical or political thinker. He did allow his personal experiences, specifically the success of Meyerbeer and other Jewish musicians, to shape his thinking on abstract subjects; he did, to a reprehensible extent, indulge his intellectualoid fantasies in speech and in print. He was able to do so without confronting the possible consequences of this indulgence because of the settled atmosphere of progress and culture of which he was both the product and the scourge. He was morally a dubious creature, and he bears grave responsibility for his sins just because he was his whole life so capable of self-control—when it suited his interests.

BUT there is much more in Professor Katz's book than its estimable surface content. There is, it seems to me, a deeper content too, and perhaps even an agenda which, if not precisely hidden, is at least only rarely made explicit.

The first part of what I see as the deeper content of *The Darker Side of Genius* concerns Professor Katz's reason for writing the book at all. Though he has performed his scholarly duties here with admirable devotion, he is not by training or by life-interest a Wagner scholar; the facts which he adduces, though he marshals them elegantly, are not new, and the interpretations he puts upon them are not revolutionary. Why, then, go to all this effort? The answer perhaps has to do with the present conflicted status of Wagner's operas in Germany and Israel.

It can hardly be doubted that Professor Katz, in writing a book about Wagner's anti-Semitism which does not discuss his operas, believes in a separation between Wagner's art and his politics. At least by implication, Professor Katz accepts the idea that Wagner was a disciplined artist, but not a disciplined thinker; his art was permanent, but his political ideas, including those about the Jews, were transient. From this, I think it is possible to infer that Professor Katz would like, through doing justice to the bloody history of German-Jewish relations, to lay to rest the conflict over Wagner's operas, major works of German culture which in themselves became a part of the cherished dream of *Bildung*.

Another part of the deeper content of Professor Katz's book relates to the role of Jewish realities in the functioning of anti-Semitism. Professor Katz makes clear that emancipation for the Jews in 19th-century Germany was an illusory hope, because at best it was predicated upon the complete renunciation by the Jews of their Jewishness. He also makes clear that emancipation on this basis was not offered in good faith, because those offering it were not really willing to allow the Jews to pass the requisite tests. He also, briefly but nonetheless definitely, suggests several times a Jewish corollary to this Gentile position: emancipation was not open to Jews because in the end they remained enough of a separate, particularistic people to refuse to give up their defining traits.

In advancing this suggestion, Professor Katz runs the risk of being accused of softness toward the wide spectrum of anti-Semitism from genteel social prejudice all the way to the death camps. It is thus a tribute to his high courage that he provides the material for a concrete analysis of the doomed encounter between Jews and Germans which ended in the virtual annihilation of the German Jewish people.

In retrospect, what makes the situation of the Jews in the German-speaking world prior to Hitler so tragic, and their achievement so remarkable, is that despite not having achieved anything like full emancipation, despite their own unwillingness to give up their peoplehood, they managed not only to assimilate German *Kultur* and in so doing to attain to a remarkable degree of *Bildung*. Even more, by the Weimar period they had actually produced a huge number of German civilization's most illustrious representatives and last significantly great figures. Professor Katz, born in the pre-World War I Austro-Hungarian empire and educated in pre-World War II Germany, is himself an exemplar of this flowering.

It is, finally, deeply fitting that *The Darker Side of Genius* should now be published in the United States, a country which more than any other in human history has been capable of accepting Jews both on its own terms and on theirs. This is the glory of a nation of immigrant peoples, each coming here not to merge unnoticed into the great majority but to remain, as loyal Americans, themselves. It is a model that was unimaginable to the Germany of Richard Wagner's time, but one that Jacob Katz—Central European by birth, German-speaking by education, Israeli by choice, and Jew to the depth of his being—must surely regard with bemused admiration.

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The Rise & Fall of Roman Polanski

Tod Lindberg

. . . Europe was my true home—I loved the sheer antiquity and asymmetry that made it so different from modern, four-square America. . . .
—*Roman,* by ROMAN POLANSKI

IN AMERICA at least, Roman Polanski has at last fallen on hard times. The writer-director's latest movie, *Pirates,* released here last summer, was met by a critical reception that was at best inattentive, at worst derisive and hostile. The results were no better at the box office: out in the country, the movie lasted only a couple of weeks in general release, and even in the great city markets of New York and Los Angeles, *Pirates* quickly disappeared beneath the crush of the summer's blockbusters.

The movie was far from Polanski's first flop—in fact the list of his marginal-to-unsuccessful movies is a bit longer than the list of his successes, headed by *Chinatown* (1974) and *Rosemary's Baby* (1968). But in the past, there was no denying the fact that people took him very seriously. The critics with near unanimity acclaimed him as one of the handful of great directors. His audience awaited his movies with a sense of anticipation, even excitement.

Not so with *Pirates.* The movie premiered at the Cannes film festival in the spring of 1986. But Americans by and large stayed away from Cannes last year, allegedly owing to fears of terrorism, and the movie's notices there were lukewarm. For that reason, perhaps, the publicity surrounding its release in the United States—the test of whether a movie is simply ordinary or, somehow, an event—found its pathetic total expression in a 1,500-word article in the new women's fashion magazine, *Elle.*

"I am widely regarded, I know, as an evil, profligate dwarf," Polanski wrote somewhat notoriously in *Roman,* his 1984 autobiography. In a sense, the statement is as true now as it was then, which is to say it is partially true. But in a larger sense, it is also true that as of now, Roman Polanski is simply not "widely regarded" at all.

What a change that is for a man whose life and movies wound so intricate a path through his times—Poland, Western Europe, and the United States after the war, or at least that segment of each concerned with the movies. This is the period, as Richard Grenier has explained in these pages, during which television rose as the great mass art form and movies suffered a corresponding decline. Millions would still go to the movies, but no longer tens of millions. The ones who were left would perhaps have more in common, at least vicariously, with the producers of what they consumed than had ever been true before.

Was this so even in the case of Polanski? Here, after all, was someone whose jet-set exploits were legendary: the parties in Hollywood, London, Paris, Rome, Gstaad. Legendary, too, was his taste in women—more properly, girls. He had fled the United States in 1978 in order to avoid serving more time in prison as a result of a guilty plea in a case of statutory rape that had played on front pages throughout the country. It was not the first time he had been seen in the company of beautiful young girls. In the late 60's, in the aftermath of the bizarre murders of his wife Sharon Tate and others at his house in Los Angeles, the accusations leveled against the way he and his friends lived—the libertine life of unconventional sex and exotic drugs—would be remembered and held against him long after Charles Manson and his followers were behind bars for the murders. So to the moviemaking, even the moviegoing, set, Polanski was truly an *enfant terrible,* the one who went too far, perhaps even an "evil, profligate dwarf" (he is indeed very short).

A number of critics of a variety of stripes have probed at Polanski's movies in an effort to find a connecting thread, both among the movies themselves and between the movies and the life. The largest effort is Barbara Leaming's 1981 *Polanski: A Biography,* the subtitle of which is "The Filmmaker as Voyeur." Behind the overwrought language and analytic obscurantism of the higher film criticism ("Polanski's most compelling attempt at self-scrutiny thus far—and arguably his best film—is *The Tenant,* whose intimate iconography is rivaled only by Jean Cocteau at his most personal") lies the notion of the subtitle: Polanski, like some of the characters in his movies, as a peeper at life through keyholes. The "amorality" of his movies combines with the subjective viewpoint of the camera, in this reading, to put the audience as well in the position of a peeper.

There is something to this, though not much. The reason criticism of Polanski has been off the mark is that Polanski himself has been right *on* the mark, making movies that quite spectacularly have expressed the sensibility of the audience. There has been little difference between the ideas in his movies and the ideas in circulation during the 60's and 70's among the new moviegoers, including the critics.

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They were an astonishing set of ideas, and they seem all the more astonishing now that we have a little distance behind us.

Insanity, for example, became the subject of a new psychoanalytic look in those years. From the likes of R.D. Laing and others, we were to learn to understand schizophrenics as they understood themselves, and we were to do this by watching them closely and listening to what they had to say. On one literary subfront, the Beats and their successors were also finding wisdom in madness (if necessary, drug-induced madness). Allen Ginsberg saw the "best minds" of his generation, "starving hysterical naked, dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn." In 1962 Ken Kesey published *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, a popular redaction of the notion that the insane are actually responding sanely to an insane world.

Just so, in 1965 Polanski made *Repulsion*. In this movie Catherine Deneuve plays Carol, a virginal London manicurist. Her sister Helen and Helen's lover Michael leave town on vacation. Carol, simultaneously attracted and repelled by the thought of their lovemaking, and by the advances of her own boyfriend, begins a steep descent into madness. Hallucinations —cracks in the wall, a man in the mirror, a rape scene (is Michael the rapist?), hands reaching out through the wall for her—lead the way to murder, first of her boyfriend, then of the landlord (who tries to seduce her). When Helen and her lover return, they find Carol catatonic. An ambulance arrives, and Michael carries her out to it.

It was a new point of view, that of a fly on the wall of the asylum. Polanski returned to it in 1974, with *The Tenant*. "I myself played Trelkowski," he writes, "the shy Polish-born bank clerk whose creeping schizophrenia culminates in transvestitism and suicide."

In between these two forays into schizophrenia came *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), the movie that would earn Polanski a commercial success as great as his critical reputation. In this film a young woman (Mia Farrow), in the course of her pregnancy, gradually becomes convinced she is the victim of a great satanic conspiracy, one involving her husband, their neighbors, her obstetrician, and still others. When she finally does give birth, they tell her the child was stillborn, but through the thin walls of the apartment building she hears an infant crying. Summoning her courage, she investigates. In the apartment next door, she finds a gathering of all those she had suspected and more. At the end of the room is a cradle, wrapped in black. Rosemary looks in, recoils as she sees the catlike eyes. She shrinks away and the baby begins to cry. Rosemary moves closer—involuntarily. "You're trying to get me to be his mother," she protests. "Aren't you his mother?" asks the older gentleman from next door—the man we now know is master of the coven —and Rosemary moves forward and rocks the cradle gently.

In keeping with the new fascination with insanity, Polanski left open (as he later wrote) "the possibility that Rosemary's supernatural experiences were figments of her imagination. The entire story, as seen through her eyes, could have been a chain of only superficially sinister coincidences, a product of her feverish fancies."

But in line with another set of ideas, as new as those about insanity, the movie also inaugurated an entire subgenre of movies in which children are evil—the *Exorcist*, *The Omen*, *Damien*, *Children of the Corn*. Meanwhile, a number of women were writing essays arguing substantially the same point. In the early 1960's, Betty Friedan had first diagnosed "the problem that has no name," namely, a vague sense of insufficiency and worthlessness on the part of women who were keeping house, bearing children, and doing little else. The radical feminists who followed, even if they did not go so far as to say that children were avatars of the devil (though some did), nevertheless saw in them the means by which women's choices were radically restricted in the interests of preserving the patriarchy.

THAT was only one of the problems with no name. To a large part of a generation of young people, hell was Scarsdale. Thoreau's remark that "the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation" was never so widely quoted as in those years. Seething within what appeared to be standard middle-class households were bubbles of claustrophobia and tension that, it was said, threatened to explode at any moment.

Unbearable domestic tension was the underlying mood as well of Polanski's first movie, *Knife in the Water* (1962), the only one he made in Poland. "It started out," he writes, "as a straightforward thriller: a couple aboard a small yacht take on a passenger who appears in mysterious circumstances. From the first, the story concerned the interplay of antagonistic personalities within a confined space." Andrzej, a sportswriter, and his beautiful younger wife Christine are driving to their boat for an overnight sail when a young man steps out in the road in front of the car. Andrzej brings it to a sudden halt. The boy asks for a ride, and Andrzej obliges, eventually issuing him an invitation to join them on the boat.

Andrzej welcomes the opportunity to show off for his wife by besting the younger man, who knows nothing of boats and sailing. Their competition is intense, eventually resulting in a fight that ends with the boy falling overboard, apparently to drown (he has told them he cannot swim). Andrzej leaves the boat, ostensibly to inform the police. But in his absence, the boy returns. He seduces Christine, and departs again. When Andrzej comes back, Christine quickly sees that he has been too afraid to go to the police. As they drive off, she tells him there is no need—the boy is alive—and she confesses her infidelity. He cannot believe it. The movie ends with the car stopped on the road, Andrzej unable to decide between accepting his wife's infidelity or facing the possibility of a murder charge. Such are the choices of domestic life.

Chinatown (1974)—probably Polanski's most famous work and an entry on most short lists for the

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best movie of the decade—arrived during a period in which it was *de rigueur* to think that the rich and the powerful were at best venal and corrupt, at worst murderously greedy. Great numbers of revisionist historians and their counterparts in more popular forms were attributing similar qualities to virtually all the men associated with nation- or city-building, from George Washington and Thomas Jefferson to Robert Moses and J. Edgar Hoover.

When Polanski first read the script of *Chinatown* he thought it was "a potentially first-rate thriller showing how the history and boundaries of L.A. had been fashioned by human greed." He made it something a bit more radical than that. In the end, the movie's various plot strands, involving local politics in the Los Angeles of the 30's, incest, and murder, do not actually come together, but the point of it all is clear enough, echoing yet another idea of the period —the powerlessness of the individual against economic and political evil. "Fighting city hall"—the common man's struggle and eventual triumph against what seem to be insurmountable odds—was a cliché of the old Hollywood. The new cliché had it that trying to fight city hall is horribly and totally futile.

Finally, still another element in the 60's and 70's brew was the notion (most prominently espoused by Norman O. Brown in *Life Against Death* and *Love's Body*) that sexual repression is dangerous. "Polymorphous perversity" and the release of inhibition became the cultural imperative of the day. In 1973 Polanski made *What?*, "a ribald, Rabelaisian account of the adventures of a fey, innocent girl, wholly unaware of the sort of company that surrounds her in a weird Riviera villa inhabited exclusively by phallocrats." And in *Repulsion* and *The Tenant*, it is at least in part sexual fear and loathing that drive Catherine Deneuve's character and the character played by Polanski himself into homicidal or suicidal insanity.

In only one area did Polanski fail to resonate with the ideas of the 1960's and 1970's, and that was in the area of politics proper, an exception certainly traceable to his tempestuous personal experience. As a boy, Polanski, born in Poland of Jewish parents, had escaped the Nazi liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in Cracow through the efforts of his father (who survived the Holocaust, though Polanski's mother, who had been transported earlier, did not). The Soviet liberators came—"For the first and perhaps the only time in Polish history," he writes in *Roman*, "Russians were made welcome in Poland"—and quickly consolidated their own brand of tyranny.

The young Polanski managed to obtain a rare passport that allowed him to travel in and out of Poland as he pleased, and he took advantage of it to live in the West, mainly in Paris. He took up with and eventually married the American actress Sharon Tate. He was in London, working on a script, when Tate, well along in pregnancy, and three friends were brutally murdered in his Los Angeles home. The press hounded him when he returned, and would continue to do so until long after the Manson "family" had been caught and its derangements revealed. The murders were wanton. Charles Manson did not even know who lived in the house when he ordered his disciples to kill its occupants.

The ravages of the Holocaust, murderous Soviet expansionism, the counterculture at its most grotesque and brutal—through these, Polanski navigated as best he could. His personal experience left him with a set of opinions that, in the case of Communism at least, were much at variance with the received views of the 1960's and 1970's.

More than once in *Roman*, he writes of "the tyranny of Communism." His description of how he and his fellow students at the Lodz film school yearned for and emulated Western culture is often touching, as is his personal reaction to the rise and crushing of Solidarity in his homeland. During Solidarity's heyday, he had returned to Poland for a visit. When the government imposed martial law shortly thereafter,

> I saw it as one more episode in our national tragedy. This time, however, I had lived through some of Solidarity's finest hours in person, seen for myself how freedom still stirred in the hearts of the Polish people, witnessed their remarkable courage and endurance in the face of Communist tyranny.

Yet Polanski is a perfect exemplar of Irving Kristol's observation that being anti-Communist does not make one bourgeois, or even pro-bourgeois. A great deal of radicalism can remain. As he writes of his days in Lodz:

> My new friends, who were dissidents to a man, reacted against the drab, conformist tyranny of Communism in a variety of ways. They displayed their contempt for authority by taking a keen interest in contemporary Western literature and music, notably jazz, by baring their souls in a very un-Polish manner, and even by engaging—almost as a matter of principle—in homosexuality. They likewise felt that deliberate idleness and excessive drinking were blows struck for freedom.

Even toward the counterculture that murdered his wife Polanski could remain sympathetic, seeing the murder as an "obscene perversion of hippie values."

Polanski, the *enfant terrible*, is the Norman Mailer of movie directors —someone whose work has taken a subsidiary position in public reckoning to the *Sturm und Drang* of the way he lives his life. But if Mailer's efforts on behalf of a "revolution in consciousness" (including drunken brawling, defending criminals, and so forth) seem contrivances, artificial attempts to infuse what ought to have been an ordinary life with high drama, Polanski is the genuine article. The drugs, the alcohol, the parties—in writing about all of them in *Roman*, he is offhand and undefensive. So, too, in the case of sex. That, of course, is precisely what got him into serious legal trouble and led to his seemingly permanent flight from the United States in 1978.

He was in California, working on a number of projects, including a photography spread for the

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French magazine *Vogue Hommes*:

> A recent . . . issue had devoted several pages to photographs of adolescent girls by David Hamilton. They were in his usual romantic style, deliberately blurred and unfocused. I told [the magazine's editor Gerald] Azaria I'd much rather do a similar series of my own, but not in the Hamilton manner. I proposed to show girls as they really were these days—sexy, pert, and thoroughly human.

That is how he met the girl he refers to in his book as Sandra, a thirteen-year-old. In the actor Jack Nicholson's house (nobody was home, but he and Nicholson were great friends), at the conclusion of their second shoot, after a naked swim, after some champagne and allegedly some Quaaludes, Polanski and the girl had sex.

His subsequent arrest took him completely by surprise, as it had never occurred to him that he had done anything wrong. The girl, he claimed and continues to claim, had been a willing participant. What could the matter be? He was indicted on six counts, ultimately pleading guilty to the least serious of them, "unlawful sexual intercourse." A probation report was ordered to determine whether or not he was a "mentally disordered sexual offender." The report was favorable to Polanski, but facing more time in prison (he had served 42 days) and likely deportation, Polanski boarded a British Airways flight to London. He quickly moved on to France, where he was by then a citizen, and so could not face extradition for this kind of charge.

The affair was not, to put it mildly, an isolated incident. When he first slept with the actress Nastassja Kinski (in a *ménage à trois*, no less), she was fifteen. And there is this remarkable passage in *Roman*. The year is 1970, shortly after the conclusion of the Manson case, and Polanski is staying in the chalet of a Swiss industrialist in Gstaad, "the finishing-school capital of the world":

> It was now that Kathy, Madeleine, Sylvia, and others whose names I forget played a fleeting but therapeutic role in my life. They were all between sixteen and nineteen years old, schoolgirls no longer but not yet worldly-wise women with professional or marital ambitions. At this stage their dearest wish was to escape, however briefly, from the straitjacket atmosphere of boarding school routine.
>
> They took to visiting my chalet, not necessarily to make love—though some of them did—but to listen to rock music and sit around the fire and talk. What drew them into my orbit was the lure of forbidden fruit—of staying out late when they should have been tucked up in a dormitory. . . .
>
> What *was* I doing there? What did we talk about, those girls and I? Music, books, school, skiing, friends, parents. What did we have in common? That's a question I've often been asked. I've never tried to analyze such friendships closely. I can only say that like so many girls of their age, they had untapped reserves of intelligence and imagination. They weren't using their bodies to further their careers; they weren't on the lookout for parts; they didn't want to hear about distribution rights or film finance—not even about the Manson murders. And they were more beautiful, in a natural, coltish way, than they would ever be again.

THIS is Polanski as Humbert Humbert, but with a couple of crucial differences. Polanksi's life, unlike that of Nabokov's notorious character, is not limited to his obsession. And the light of Polanski's life is not the single flame of a Lolita; his obsession, to the extent that it is one, is serial, with what he takes to be successive realizations of an aesthetic ideal. In acting on this obsession, he is actually a mentally quite well-ordered sex offender.

But the far more important difference between the real Polanski and Nabokov's Humbert derives from the times in which each "lives." The 1950's America through which Humbert and Lolita traveled was a country that conformed quite closely to "modern, four-square America," to use Polanski's offhand notation in his autobiography. If Humbert were found out, he would be doomed; it is as simple as that.

It was by no means so simple in the America of the late 1960's and 70's. The radical feminists' views on the subject of children were only part of a general cultural abandonment of the idea that children are vulnerable, unfinished people, in need of protection and training by their elders and love from them. The new esteem in which "young adults" had come to be held—two of the more conspicuous examples of which were the extension of the vote to eighteen-year-olds and the tremendous say in education that university administrators and teachers gave to those they used to think of as their charges—soon began to be applied to younger and younger age groups. By the end of the 1970's, "out of the mouths of babes" had become the avenue for gaining wisdom on subjects as diverse as poverty and race and nuclear war.

The times also saw an astonishing amount of attention devoted to adolescent sexuality. Sex education had become a part of the curriculum of many junior and senior high schools, and information on contraception and, when necessary, abortion flowed freely from adults to teen-agers. This, too, was the period of the newly explicit teen-age sex movie. The Brooke Shields phenomenon—the child-model, the child as provocative object even of sexual desire—may have been duly deplored in some quarters, but it should have come as no surprise, given the extent to which adults had been devoting themselves to thinking about teen-agers and sex. And if the age of the models worked its way down—fourteen, thirteen, twelve, eleven—that too was part of the devolution of the age of childhood. The apotheosis of the times might have been an audience earnestly watching a movie in which an extraordinarily beautiful teen-age girl becomes pregnant, grapples seriously with the issue of what to do, and decides to abort the fetus.

SUCH was the climate of ideas, such was elite opinion—why not call it evil and profligate?—in

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which Roman Polanski did what he did. It does not mitigate the extent of his crime in California to ask now a question that seems not to have been asked then: where was "Sandra" 's mother in all of this? Why was she letting her thirteen-year-old take her clothes off in front of a stranger with a camera? Any fair reading of what is publicly known about the girl's mother, in her own way a creature of Hollywood, suggests that she simply did not see anything wrong—at least not with *that*.

It is probably not overreaching to say that by nominating *Tess* (starring Nastassja Kinski) for eleven Academy Awards, including Polanski for best director, the Hollywood of 1979 was letting the world know that it did not hold his personal behavior against him as a moviemaker. But it may also be fair to say that by holding *Tess* to three Oscars in minor categories, Hollywood hedged.

If so, it may well have been for good reason. The contrast in American society between elite and popular opinion is well-documented. There were, there are, those who think they know a child molester when they see one, and Hollywood and its elite audience may have understood that they could be asking for trouble if they tried to say otherwise. Better to acquiesce in the idea that Polanski is "an evil, profligate dwarf"—even though he is your kind of evil, profligate dwarf.

HAPPILY, the complex of ideas associated with Polanski is no longer in the ascendant in America. There is now, for example, a general sense, evident even among radical activists, that we ought to do better by those who are mentally ill. Radical feminism did not quite carry the day on the question of the menace posed by children, and a minor cottage industry of movements has recently emerged dedicated to protecting them: from drunk drivers, from molesters, from drugs, from rock music. By now virtually all the news-magazines have gone on record to the effect that the sexual revolution is over; herpes was the shot fired across the prow, AIDS the fusillade. Even Hollywood has discovered—thanks to market research—that the crucial teen-age audience may feel intimidated and put off by nudity on the screen.

Polanski's moviemaking, too, shows signs of being more than a little out of step with America. *Pirates*, which he made with a number of his friends and collaborators from the old days, is genuinely devil-may-care in spirit, a quality that American audiences generally like. But one of the consequences of the Steven Spielberg/George Lucas triumph in American movies has been to create in audiences the sense that high spirits are not enough, that a devil-may-care effect can only be brought off successfully through calculation and meticulous execution. Those two qualities are absent from *Pirates*.

Meanwhile, Roman Polanski himself now lives in Europe, now makes his home there. Does Europe make him welcome? It is an important question because the story of Polanski's rise and fall in the United States is the story writ small of American culture's recent embrace of an especially dangerous kind of decadence—largely European in origin, like Humbert and Polanski—and its crucial though far from complete turn away from it.

Europe is a continent of "antiquity and asymmetry," Polanski has written, and thus "my true home." The original abode of *le bourgeois gentilhomme*, Europe has also been home to the most savage attacks on bourgeois gentlemen. The question of how Americans, "modern, four-square" Americans, might feel about a Europe that continues to lap up and live by the sorts of ideas that Americans themselves have been striving mightily to defeat—it is an unpleasant one to think about, though these days it bears thinking about a great deal. The case of Polanski is not the worst place to begin.

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Off Balance

ARAB AND JEW: WOUNDED SPIRITS IN A PROMISED LAND. By DAVID K. SHIPLER. *Times Books. 596 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by EDWARD ALEXANDER

ON March 28, 1982, the New York *Times* carried a story headed "West Bank Occupation Now Resembles Annexation," which included the following sentences about three Arab mayors dismissed by Ariel Sharon: "All were the targets of car bombings in 1980. Mr. Shaka lost both legs, Mr. Khalef lost a foot, and Mr. Tawil escaped injury; the bomb meant for him blinded an Israeli soldier. Their assailants were never arrested."

Not mentioned in this story was the fact that the Israeli soldier had been blinded while trying to defuse the bomb, not while trying to set it. Also not mentioned was that the reason the assailants had not been arrested (as they eventually were) was that they had not been discovered. Heavily implied was that the assailants had been identified but not arrested.

Since he wrote that story, the right hand of David Shipler, who was then Jerusalem bureau chief for the New York *Times*, has not lost its cunning. He picks up the thread of this particular tale in *Arab and Jew*, a lengthy study of "the attitudes, images, and stereotypes that Arabs and Jews have of one another, the roots of their aversions, and the complex interactions between them." In all three sections of the book, which are entitled "Aversion," "Images," and "Interaction," Shipler relies heavily on his personal experiences in Israel, on interviews with selected Jews and Arabs (whose identification by name is one of the book's strengths), and on Arab and Jewish literature and textbooks. The book purports to eschew the political dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to concentrate on "the human dimension."

Politics, however, is also a form of human activity; and so from Shipler's style of examining "attitudes" and "impressions," political implications inevitably arise. When, for example, he returns in *Arab and Jew* to the story about the mayors, it is partly for the purpose of insinuating that the increased vote for Yuval Ne'eman's Tehiya party in the 1984 elections resulted from the impression, which Shipler reluctantly admits to be erroneous, given by some Israeli journalists that Ne'eman had endorsed the attack on the mayors. Apparently only David Shipler in all of Israel was sufficiently astute a listener to know what Ne'eman had actually said rather than what Tehiya voters (allegedly) supposed him to have said. Since Shipler infers the predatory instincts of many Israeli voters from their support of a man who *condemned* these attacks, we can readily guess what he would say about them if they had voted for a man who *condoned* the attacks.

One watches with guilty admiration as this master of artifice, who is a prominent character in his own book, lures his Jewish marionettes into the traps he has laid for them. At the outset of the book, Shipler and his wife visit a veteran of the War of Independence who pleases them mightily by deploring the falling-off in the "purity of arms" that has taken place in Israeli military behavior between 1948 and the war in Lebanon. He proudly shows these apparently reverent Americans his photo album of those good old days, and Mrs. Shipler "observed that no Israeli who had fought in Lebanon was ever going to have the experience, years from now, of pulling out photograph albums of that war and recalling that fight with . . . pride." But *Mr.* Shipler is not so easily imposed upon by Jewish nostalgia as is his wife; and so, with notable lack of chivalry, he leaves her gawking at the album while he proceeds (or so he fancies) to strip the Israelis bare of their illusions about 1948 as well.

What is noteworthy about Shipler's recitation of old and new slanders about "deliberate and forceful" expulsion of a segment of the Arab population in 1948 is not that much of it is uncritically based on a report (ascribing "2 percent of the exodus to orders . . . by the Haganah") recently found in the private papers of an Israeli imprisoned for giving information to foreign agents; or that it fails to mention the well-documented instances of Jewish leaders pleading with Arabs *not* to flee; or that it ignores the absolute contradiction between what all Arabs said in 1948—that their leaders told them to leave—and what Arab propagandists now claim; or that it imputes voluntary Arab flight to stories about Deir Yassin rather than to Arab bad conscience about past atrocities against Jews. No—what is noteworthy is that in a book which prides itself on its balance and symmetry, this lengthy account, bristling with moral outrage, of Haganah expulsion of a small percentage of the Arab population is not balanced by any similarly agitated speculation about the reasons why not one single Jew stayed behind in territory captured by the Arabs in 1948.

But even though the expulsion saga casts a black shadow over everything that is to follow, it is no more misleading about the nature of the Arab-Jewish conflict than is the "balanced" or "symmetrical" or "evenhanded" structure of *Arab and Jew* itself. For to be evenhanded or morally impartial between two sides in a conflict when one side happens to be contending for the destruction of the other is to become a moral nonentity. To avoid the appearance of being such a nonentity, you

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In 1939, there were 3.5 million Jews in Poland.
Today there are less than 5000. This is their story.

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must either redefine the conflict in the Middle East from one between Jewish nationalism and Arab nationalism to one between Jewish nationalism and the nationalism of Palestinian Arabs exclusively; or you must dodge this unpleasant business of destructive intention altogether by stressing the cultural identity of Palestinian nationalism. Shipler does both.

At the outset he announces his intention to "allow the larger Arab world to recede into the background." This makes much more manageable the problem of depicting Palestinian Arabs as the victims of Israeli Jews, and of making their displacement from their home villages (the Arab definition of refugee status) a burden infinitely heavier to bear than the constant burden of peril of people surrounded by enemies who have destroyed 15,000 Israelis in six wars. It is as if some journalist in 1936 were to have written a book about relations between Czechs and ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland, showing preternatural sensitivity to the Sudeten Germans' complaints of discrimination and mistreatment while "allowing the larger German world to recede into the background," and blithely ignoring the fact that neither perfect equality for the Sudeten Germans nor expulsion of every German from Czech territory would have mitigated by one iota the Nazi campaign to destroy Czechoslovakia.

SHIPLER's chapter on "nationalisms" devotes three pages to Jewish nationalism and the rest to Palestinian Arab nationalism and Israeli blindness to or suppression of it. The chapter uses many of the locutions mandated by the rhetoric of balance: "Palestinian diaspora," "Palestine, like Zion," "Like Jews in the Diaspora," and so on. But the crucial moment of the discussion is Shipler's story of the "dramatic Israeli move against Palestinian nationalism" which consisted in the (temporary) confiscation of the archives of the "research center" of the PLO in West Beirut in September 1982. This, according to Shipler, "was as if Israel had tried to steal the Palestinians' past and identity, as if the Israelis could not stand to see the Palestinians have a historical archive." Lest he be suspected of bias in this matter, Shipler invokes the authority of another "archivist," the Israeli Meron Benvenisti of the "West Bank Data Project," who confirms that his countrymen wanted "to take from [the Palestinians] their history."

Now the archivists at this center had indeed been diligently at work, assembling files on Israeli military officers, monitoring Israeli police, military, and civilian broadcasts, and exchanging the fruits of their abstruse researches with terrorist organizations all over the world. The center's director, Sabri Jiryis, was an adviser to Yasir Arafat, and its "faculty" included Elias Shufani, Arafat's military deputy. It was, in short, a main PLO intelligence center. As Cynthia Ozick wrote in the New York *Times* in March 1983: "To represent the military capture of a camouflaged military arm as an 'erasure' of culture and history is a stunning falsehood. But what would be worse yet is if it were not a falsehood."

That it may not be a falsehood, that what Shipler and Benvenisti call the distinctive Palestinian Arab culture amounts in some significant measure to the desire to destroy a living nation, is a possibility that runs like a red thread through *Arab and Jew*, whose author at one point admits that "much of the Arabs' nostalgia for their pre-1948 Palestine . . . was the product less of sweet memories than of current anti-Zionism." If the possibility even occurs to Shipler, how must it haunt the citizens of Israel? Few of them are likely to be reassured by his sanguine claim that Arabs "who think logically" are now willing to settle for a little "West Bank" state alongside of Israel, especially if they happen to have attended to the results of a recent poll conducted under joint Arab-American-Australian auspices and supervised by the ubiquitous Benvenisti. This poll showed that (according to the New York *Times*) "78 percent of West Bank Palestinians said their preferred ultimate solution to the Palestine problem was the establishment of a 'democratic Palestinian state in all of Palestine' while only 17 percent favored a Palestinian state limited to the West Bank and Gaza strip."

The same poll reported that 88 percent of the Arabs questioned fully support such acts of terrorism as the massacre of civilians riding on an Israeli bus traveling the coastal road in 1978. This is a fact worth keeping in mind while reading Shipler's chapter on "Terrorism: The Banality of Evil." Although he supplies some chilling anecdotes of Arab women gloating and giggling over the attack on the children's house at Kibbutz Misgav Am, he bridles with anger at the Israeli use of the term "terrorist" for the PLO because it denies the "actuality" of Palestinian nationalism. Meanwhile he refers insistently, at nearly every opportunity, to Jews who live in Judea and Samaria as "settler-terrorists," and casually identifies Yitzhak Shamir as "himself a terrorist."

BUT at least no one can complain of the terrorism chapter that it attends insufficiently to the Jews. This is not merely because the atrocious deeds of the Jewish terrorists of recent years are recounted in great detail, but because the words of the Jewish citizenry spoken in the aftermath of Arab terrorist acts are closely monitored for signs of "bigotry." In considering acts committed by Arab terrorists, Shipler believes that what is important is not so much what the Arabs do as what the Jews say. After the April 1984 terrorist attack in the center of Jerusalem, while Jewish blood was running in the streets, Shipler appears to have been patrolling the adjacent streets in search of Jews cursing Arabs, wishing them banishment or even destruction. After another Arab terrorist outrage in Jerusalem, we learn, a telephone employee read one of Shipler's Israeli leftist friends an intemperate lecture about her living in an Arab village. After six people were killed and forty-one wounded in 1983 by a bomb planted on a Jerusalem city bus, Shipler discovered an Arab friend of the brother of two little Jewish girls killed on the bus who was told, when he visited

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shortly after the event, "You're an Arab! Get out of my house!"

In each instance, it is not the killer whom Shipler excoriates, but the Israelis. Or, rather, some Israelis; for there are many who react to Arab terrorism with a cool disinterestedness that Shipler himself cannot match. There is Danny Rubinstein of *Davar*, who tells Shipler that "There is nothing wrong in terrorism" and helpfully explains that Arabs must use terror because they don't have Phantoms. Just why an organization whose assets are estimated at $5 billion cannot afford Phantoms, or why the Syrians and Libyans, lacking Phantoms but amply supplied with MiG's, persist in terrorism, the usually glib Rubinstein, generally ready to give you why for wherefore, has not explained. There are also the "liberal" Jewish students whom Shipler meets at Hebrew University, who in their "moderation" and "tolerance" never, under any circumstances, demand that an Arab reject terrorism, since this would entail denouncing "the only institution that represents his nationalist aspirations as a Palestinian."

THERE it is again, that embarrassing equation of Palestinian nationalism with the urge to destroy, made this time by precisely the "rarefied, liberal-minded circles" of Israelis whose "self-doubt" and all-consuming feelings of guilt Shipler holds up as the standard to which all Israelis (or rather, all Israeli Jews) should aspire. "Drive out nature with a fork," says Horace, "nevertheless she will continually return." The ugly equation does indeed return in the second part of the book, in which Shipler compares the images that Arabs and Jews have developed of each other during their years of interaction in Palestine. Shipler makes no attempt to conceal the blood lust that permeates Arab literature depicting Israelis; his problem comes in persuading the reader that "Arab and Jewish stereotypes of each other attain remarkable symmetry."

In this effort he is helped not only by his unchanging conviction that all cultures are created and forever remain equal but by assorted Israeli researchers, ranging from the young woman who copies anti-Arab graffiti scrawled in the lavatory she frequents at Hebrew University, to the Tel Aviv University expert on Israeli children's literature whose ponderous analyses reveal that many standard books in Israeli schools depict Arabs in general as hostile and prone to violence against Jews. These books also, to be sure, often show that Israeli "fears [of Arabs] turn out to be unfounded" and that generalities about Arabs do not necessarily tell us the truth about individuals. Nevertheless, Shipler expresses his horror that such books still remain "available in libraries" and are used in schools.

But why stop with half-measures? If a literary text is objectionable because in depicting the Hebron riots of 1929 it shows Arabs threatening to kill Jewish children, though ultimately leaving them unharmed, how much more objectionable must be the historical accounts and memoirs of that event (e.g., by Pierre van Paassen or the lone British policeman on the scene), replete with actual killings, including beheadings, severed sexual organs, and other inflammatory indelicacies? Why balk at literary texts that depict Arabs attacking with the cry of "Palestine—our land; the Jews—our dogs!" and allow Jewish children to read historical texts that depict Arabs attacking with the cry of—for this was what they really shouted—"Death to the Jews!"? Why protect children from literary stereotypes of Arabs as indifferent to Jewish suffering and then let fall into their hands the recent story in the New York *Times* by Thomas Friedman, telling of an Israeli taxi driver whose throat was slit in Gaza and who staggered for over a hundred yards past dozens of Arabs, but "none of the Arabs would get near him"?

The image of David Shipler fuming over evidence of Israeli "stereo-

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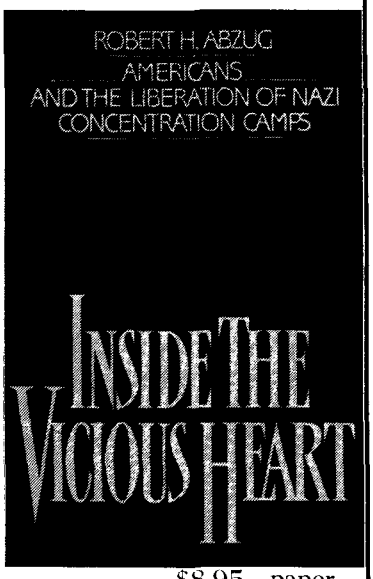

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types" of violent Arabs calls to mind the reaction of Melbourne, the Prime Minister of England, after he had read a few chapters of *Oliver Twist*: "It is all among workhouses and pickpockets and coffinmakers. . . . I do not like those things; I wish to avoid them. I do not like them in reality and therefore do not like to see them represented."

I NOTED earlier that in order to fashion his artifice of balance and symmetry, Shipler abstracts Palestinian Arabs from the larger Arab world. This is objectionable, yet less productive of distortion than his removal of the Israeli Jews from their Jewish world and his assumption that they can be understood "essentially on their own terms, without much need for reference to the Jewish Diaspora from which many of them originated." The rhetorical strategy of the book depends upon the skillful use of certain Jews, usually Israeli leftists, to condemn their countrymen and their country's religious heritage in a manner so extreme that Shipler's own criticisms appear moderate and restrained by comparison; or of Jews in whom, in Shipler's colorful idiom, "a grinding guilt works at the bowels" so fiercely that they abase themselves before hostile Arabs in a manner so sycophantic that even Shipler is embarrassed by it.

There is Shimon Avidan, who, when he looks at the famous picture of Jewish children in the Warsaw Ghetto, sees Arab children. There is the journalist Benny Morris, who has made it his special object in life to prove that the Jews forcibly expelled Arabs from western Palestine in 1948. There is Rabbi David Hartman telling Shipler that in the Hebrew Bible "you don't have welcoming of the stranger" and that Judaism "is fundamentally reactionary." There is Elhanan Naeh, talmudic scholar of the Hebrew University, revealing to Shipler that the reason why Jews admire *The Kuzari*, by the 12th-century poet and philosopher Judah Halevi, is that "the best-known things in it are racist." There is Aviezer Ravitsky of Hebrew University, arguing that Arabs who commit terrorism have more justification than Jews because they "might feel in real distress." There are the Interns for Peace, who, on the evidence of this book, appear to spend most of their free time scorching the ears of journalists with accounts of Israeli "racism." There is Mordechai Bar-On, Peace Now leader and Knesset member, who listens to an Arab woman declaring that there can never be peace with a nation like Israel, which wants only to dominate other nations and grab as much land as possible, and replies: "You are a very beautiful human being." There are the several Israelis who try to persuade Shipler that he is wrong to "boil and rage" over the exploitation of the Holocaust by Palestinian Arabs presenting Ansar as Auschwitz, themselves as Jews, and Israelis as Nazis; for, they explain—and they are all prolific explainers—the use of this inversion (manufactured for Arab use, as surely as their weapons have been, by the USSR) is really "a search for a Palestinian history." And Shipler, by no means immune to that form of liberal condescension which denies to Palestinian Arabs moral responsibility for their words and actions, is hardly unwilling to be persuaded.

SURELY, if Shipler had taken the trouble to view his Israeli subjects in relation to their Diaspora history instead of in isolation from it, he might have been less inclined to bow and nod in obeisance before every absurdity uttered to him by his guilt-ridden informants. He might, intelligent observer that he is, have recognized that a centuries-old tradition of Jews internalizing the hatreds and fantasies of anti-Semitic Gentiles and then projecting them onto other Jews did not simply cease when the Jews returned from Diaspora to Zion. Nicholas Donin and Johannes Pfefferkorn and Ludwig Börne and Karl Marx and Karl Kraus and Walter Lippmann and Bruno Kreisky, anxiety-ridden Jews eager to substantiate the most outlandish allegations brought against Jews by anti-Semites, have their continuators in Zion itself. Does Shipler suppose it a mere coincidence that ever since the UN passed its Zionism/Racism equation in 1975, many Israeli intellectuals have busied themselves in combing the land of Israel for instances of the racism of their less progressive, less Western, less enlightened fellow-citizens, and in proclaiming their discoveries to receptive ears?

At least one Israeli appears to have tried to suggest this to Shipler, but to no avail. The novelist David Shahar told him that Jews do all the PLO's propaganda for it because the PLO people are not smart enough to do it for themselves. But Shipler took the remark as another example of Jewish racism. If he could have allowed himself to understand that his interlocutor's irony was directed primarily against the Jews, not the Arabs, his Pecksniffian complacency might have been disturbed. But where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.

Democratic Capitalism

THE CAPITALIST REVOLUTION: FIFTY PROPOSITIONS ABOUT PROSPERITY, EQUALITY, AND LIBERTY. By PETER L. BERGER. *Basic Books. 262 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by MELVILLE J. ULMER

PETER BERGER, a penetrating student of society who has explored issues ranging from the economies of the Third World to political theory and the sundry religions of mankind, here focuses upon a project that is at once grand in purview and yet tightly restrained in its immediate purposes. His objective is to transcend the traditional disciplinary boundaries of political science, economics, and social psychology in order to develop a *general* theory of capitalism. In this book he presents a tentative review of the theory as well as an agenda—the "fifty propositions" of the subtitle—for longer-term study.

Berger's book is distinctly one for the times. In all industrially ma-

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ture democracies, capitalism has become a central target for attack, not just in the frontal assaults of confirmed Marxists but more commonly in the sniping of liberal intellectuals and Western-style socialists. Inevitably their influence is mirrored in the media, permeates the universities and the churches, and seeps down into the public.

Above the furor of this energetic opposition, it is difficult to hear the voices of defenders. Yet recent times have in fact produced eloquent expositors of the unique virtues of capitalism, among them Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, and Milton Friedman. Berger's book adds some further dimensions to their work (as well as to the work of Irving Kristol and Michael Novak) and probes more insistently into some of their contentions.

Berger finds the building blocks of his theory in the arguments of capitalism's detractors. Thus, one question raised at the start concerns the origin of the so-called "industrial revolution." Whether the term is apt or not, the advance of civilization quickened perceptibly from the 16th century to reach an explosion of material and intellectual gain in the late 18th and 19th centuries. That, along with the accompanying maturation of capitalistic institutions, is a historical fact. But the theory of "modernization," as Berger calls it, denies a causal relationship between the two phenomena. Although "modernizationists" do not question the core fact of technological advance, they hold that the conjunction of capitalism with it was an accident of history; man's growing command over nature could as well have borne fruit under socialism.

This issue affords Berger an opportunity to identify the distinctive attributes of capitalism, which he defines as "production for a market by enterprising individuals or combines with the purpose of making a profit." He goes on:

> [Capitalism] presupposes rational calculation by means of double-entry bookkeeping, which is much more than a clerical technique; rather it constitutes a new mind set for economic activity—the rationally calculating pursuit of profit. Further characteristics are the appropriation of all the material means of production (land, tools, machines, and so on) as private property; freedom of the market (as against various precapitalist, typically feudal restrictions); rational technology geared to economic activity; a rational (and thus predictable) legal system; free labor (as against various forms of slavery or serfdom); and last but not least, the commercialization of the economy, which means above all the growing importance of freely traded shares and securities.

All these attributes, Berger argues, make capitalism especially suited to promote progress of the kind that is historically associated with the industrial revolution. He takes note too of one irreplaceable earmark of capitalism, first sug-

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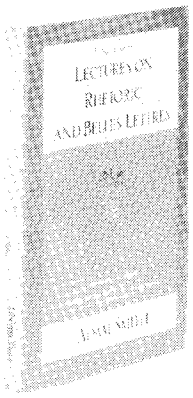

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gested by Adam Smith, that may well represent the most important source of its efficiency. This is the automatic information system inherent in the trillions of transactions executed daily in free markets. These yield the prices, supplies, and demands that can guide a nation's allocation of productive resources with an effectiveness far exceeding that of the most marvelously powerful computer or, certainly, the decisions of a centralized bureaucracy. So long as competition is kept open, they see to it that the wants of society, as measured by its demand, are satisfied at the least possible cost, rendering impossible the ubiquitous and often pathetically futile lines of would-be customers before retail shops that are observable everywhere behind the Iron Curtain.

ANOTHER key point of contention has to do with the relation of capitalism to democracy. In the eyes of socialists everywhere, the presumably free political and economic institutions of capitalism are wholly or in large part a sham, shielding the realities of class division, alienation, and exploitation. "Bourgeois" democracy is considered the outer shell of an actual dictatorship, exercised by a plutocractic minority over the mass of the population. *True* democracy, such opponents of capitalism aver, can come to life only with public ownership and control of the means of production.

By contrast, Berger holds that precisely this condition of public ownership is a recipe for totalitarian oppression, promising the evaporation of freedom in virtually all its dimensions. For it accords to a government bureaucracy an unchallengeable mastery over *both* political and economic life. As Berger writes:

> It is not possible to impose a socialist system without force, since those who are to be dispossessed in this imposition will not graciously assent to their fate. Hence, as Marx and all other mainline Marxists argued, there must be a dictatorship. What neither Marx nor most of his epigones understood is that this need for dictatorship increases rather than decreases with the successful establishment of socialism: central planning of the economy and despotic politics are intrinsically linked phenomena. The degree of power required by "the plan" requires dictatorial powers; conversely, there is a natural tendency for a despotic elite to seek control over the economy on which its power rests.

Hence Berger offers the following proposition: "There is an affinity between socialism" and both "authoritarian governance" and "the totalitarian project for modern society." The results of that affinity can be seen in today's socialist countries all over the world; Berger remains, moreover, "highly skeptical" of the chance that the visions of Western democratic socialists, if realized, would prove to be an exception to the rule.

Capitalism, by contrast, holds both arms open to political and personal as well as economic liberties. Berger does not claim that capitalism is a *sufficient* condition for these indispensable elements of human welfare, but he does insist that it is a necessary condition. "Put simply," he writes, "capitalism creates escape hatches from political power" by preserving a market system free of direct government control.

To be sure, ferocious authoritarians, while allowing private ownership of the means of production, have crushed personal freedoms of virtually all kinds, including the right to life. But as long as a portion of the economy remains truly open to the market system, a potential corner of opportunity will remain, pitifully small though it may become. In this sector of society, individualism can realize some of its potentialities and aspire to more. Thus, as a necessary though not sufficient condition, capitalism provides the only home for democracy today and very likely the only one possible.

Berger is frank to acknowledge the existence of cross-currents, or "contradictions," which some writers have imagined might be troublesome or even fatal. Joseph Schumpeter foresaw a virus of anti-capitalism taking hold in a burgeoning class of intellectuals bred by the success of capitalism itself. More recent writers on the same theme have perceived a more or less automatic seeding of discord as democratic capitalism produces ever greater degrees of affluence.

Thus, Daniel Bell has observed a growing conflict between the Protestant ethic, supporting prudential effort and the meritocratic system, and the consumer ethic encouraging instant gratification and rewards divorced from obligations; he traces the clash to the behavior of business corporations which demand discipline from their employees but implant profligacy in their customers. In Mancur Olson's scenario, the enemy is to be located in the rise of powerful interest groups which seek legalized entitlements and other forms of "monopolistic gains, gradually throttling the incentive for production and the generative power essential for capitalism's survival." Berger describes these interesting potentialities for conflict but comments on them only briefly, pointing to "mediating institutions"—voluntary associations of all sorts, a free press, family, and church—that help to provide stability to a "society marked by social and political pluralism."

THOUGH Berger is in general an extraordinarily effective writer, in this book his effort to produce a piece of pure social science and to avoid polemics or advocacy leads him to adopt verbal devices which often retard and sometimes impede the flow of argument.

For example, not just once but repeatedly Berger reminds his readers that all fifty of his propositions, each quite formally presented, are simply hypotheses requiring further study and verification. Yet many are no more than statements of firmly established historical fact. These include: "Industrial capitalism has generated the greatest productive power in human history" (Proposition 1); "To date, no other socioeconomic system has been able to generate comparable productive power" (Proposition 2); "Advanced industrial capitalism has generated, and continues to generate, the highest material standard of living

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for large masses of people in history" (Proposition 5). These are not in any sense disputable, tentative, or predictive statements, nor are many others. Some of the "propositions," indeed, border on truisms.

In his closing chapter, Berger feels compelled to advise the reader that the analysis he has presented "is neither pro- nor anti-capitalist" —for if it were one or the other it would be *ipso facto* unscientific. But in this chapter he also powerfully declares his own allegiance not only to the capitalist economic system but to the cluster of social and political values historically and logically associated with it. Not coincidentally, he writes here to good effect and with an easier literary grace than is displayed in his earlier, "value-free" analysis.

Socialism, Berger writes, is "one of the most powerful myths of the modern era." As such, it is not likely to be disconfirmed in the minds of its adherents by mere empirical evidence, irrefutable though that evidence has become in our century. Thanks to this important book, however, anyone not otherwise in thrall to socialist modes of thought can now readily avail himself of an arsenal of systematic argument concerning the economic, social, and political virtues of democratic capitalism. In Peter Berger the party of prosperity, equality, and liberty has found a brilliant expositor and a forceful defender.

Enlightened Orthodoxy

THE HALAKHIC MIND: AN ESSAY ON JEWISH TRADITION AND MODERN THOUGHT. By JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK. *Seth Press. 135 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

ORTHODOX Judaism is much in the news these days, and much of the news is not good. In both Israel and the United States, extremist elements appear to hold sway in the Orthodox community, engaging in activities seemingly calculated to outrage Jewish opinion at large. The list of negative actions is long and depressing: ultra-Orthodox groups in Israel burning down bus shelters; the Israeli Minister of the Interior—a leader of the rigorously Orthodox Shas party—moving to delegitimate Reform converts to Judaism; the staunchly traditionalist Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States proclaiming that prayers uttered in Conservative and Reform synagogues are worthless; mainstream Orthodox groups in the United States vetoing the participation of the Reconstructionist movement in the Synagogue Council of America. In short, where Conservative and Reform Judaism seem to be moving, at their varying paces, "leftward," in the direction of a greater accommodation with the contemporary mores of American society, Orthodoxy is moving "rightward."

Given today's atmosphere, it takes a leap of the imagination to recall that once upon a time in Israel and the United States there was a very different Orthodoxy, or at least a very different *idea* of Orthodoxy—one characterized by openness toward modern culture, a broad tolerance of both non-Orthodox Jews and non-Jews, and a desire to engage rather than reject the world. To those who still cling to the vision of such an enlightened Orthodoxy, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (b. 1903) is, more than ever, the indispensable figure. Today, he alone among the acknowledged leaders of Orthodox Judaism can be invoked in support of the position that Orthodoxy must not only strive to be responsive to the modern context, but must show itself able to master it.

Over the years, Soloveitchik, who is now well into his eighties and retired from teaching at New York's Yeshiva University, has sought to meet the challenge posed by modernity by pursuing a two-pronged

DAVID SINGER *is director of Information and Research Services of the American Jewish Committee. He is working on an intellectual biography of Joseph Soloveitchik.*

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intellectual agenda. On the one hand, he has labored to demonstrate the range and flexibility of the Halakhah (the corpus of traditional Jewish law), stressing, in particular, its ability to cope with changed circumstances. On the other hand, Soloveitchik has employed the categories of 20th-century thought to construct an Orthodox theology that speaks in a distinctly modern voice. Soloveitchik's newly published volume, *The Halakhic Mind*—really an extended essay, written in 1944 but appearing now for the first time—is a representative specimen of his efforts in this latter genre.

The reason Soloveitchik has always been able to gain a hearing for his views in the Orthodox community, despite fierce opposition in many quarters, is that his status as an authoritative Orthodox spokesman—in Hebrew, a *gadol*—is unassailable. Leadership in Orthodoxy depends, first and foremost, on mastery of the Talmud, and Soloveitchik is by any account a talmudic master *par excellence.** Moreover, not only is Soloveitchik a brilliant talmudist in his own right, he is the heir to a family tradition of great talmudic learning. That tradition extends at least as far back as to his great-grandfather Joseph Baer, the co-head of the great Volozhin yeshiva of Lithuania. Soloveitchik's grandfather, known universally in the world of traditional Jewish learning as Hayyim "Brisker," revolutionized Talmud study through the use of a highly abstract mode of conceptual analysis. The "Brisker" method was carried to Palestine and the United States by, respectively, Soloveitchik's uncle Isaac Zev and his father Moses, who preceded his son as head of Yeshiva University's Talmud faculty. As a staunch family loyalist who has consistently championed the "Brisker" way, Soloveitchik freely draws upon the accrued merit—and status—of the generations.

Precisely because Soloveitchik presents such a sharp contrast to more traditionalist spokesmen in the Orthodox community, one must be careful not to overstate the element of modernity in his own approach. Thus it must be borne in mind that Soloveitchik himself is in many ways a pious traditionalist, moving with perfect ease amid the established structures of Orthodoxy. Soloveitchik, in fact, is a *rosh yeshiva* (a master teacher of the talmudic tradition), and the bulk of his time, day in and day out, is given over to the pious examination of Judaism's sacred texts. When he sits down to analyze a passage from the Talmud, his exclusive concern is with the issues raised by the classical commentators; when he explores a biblical narrative, his guiding assumptions are taken directly from the Midrash and the exegetical writings. Soloveitchik lives and works in an environment characterized by intense religiosity; virtually all of his contacts are with other Orthodox Jews; virtually all of his activities are centered on the Halakhah.

WHAT then makes Soloveitchik different? The answer, quite simply, is that Soloveitchik acknowledges with frankness the power, allure, and authority of the secular realm. Orthodox traditionalists may sneer at secular culture, but Soloveitchik knows better. While it is not clear what prompted him, in a break with the inherited pattern of his family, to obtain a university education—he holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Berlin—the consequences of that education are everywhere apparent in his major theological writings and his general intellectual posture. For Soloveitchik, the Western intellectual tradition, particularly in its modern manifestations, is a fountainhead of authoritative knowledge and intellectual truth. It is inconceivable to him that Orthodoxy might move forward in the 20th century without entering into a serious dialogue with Western thought and particularly with modern philosophy, mathematics, and science. The refusal of such a dialogue would leave Orthodox

* Two volumes of Soloveitchik's commentaries on the Talmud have been published in recent years: *Lectures in Memory of My Father, My Teacher* (in Hebrew), 1983; and *Collected Novellae* (in Hebrew), 1984. Other such works are scheduled to appear in the near future.

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Judaism open to charges of religious obscurantism and intellectual bad faith.

Orthodox self-respect, then—in this case tied to the need for religious authenticity—requires that the Western intellectual tradition be confronted, and this Soloveitchik has himself proposed to do. The broad reach of his own personal dialogue with modern intellectual currents may be readily gauged from his three most important theological essays: "Halakhic Man" (1944); "Lonely Man of Faith" (1965); and "But If You Search There" (1978). "Halakhic Man"—the work that first established Soloveitchik's reputation as a theologian—takes up the major themes of neo-Kantian philosophy, applying them in creative fashion to the world of traditional Talmud study. "Lonely Man of Faith," in contrast, employs the categories of existentialist analysis to put forward a powerful vision of the "biblical knight of faith." "But If You Search There," in yet another departure, draws upon the work of the phenomenological school to depict the complex spiritual dialectic leading to *devekut*—mystical attachment to God. All three essays are models of prodigious learning, both Jewish and secular.

In *The Halakhic Mind*—a volume, it needs to be pointed out, of limited interest to the general reader due to the technical nature of its subject matter and the author's Germanic mode of expression—Soloveitchik carries forward his dialogue with modern secular thought, arguing at length that the "paradoxical present-day conflict of science and philosophy and the crisis of the latter may yet give birth to a new religious world perspective." Soloveitchik is here alluding to the emergence of a revitalized philosophy of religion, something that he regards as an urgent desideratum. As he states:

> Reality, as the object upon which the cognitive act is directed, can no longer be the concern of the scientist and philosopher only, but also that of the *homo religiosus*. . . . Religion, too, has a cognitive approach to reality. Religious experience is not only of emotional or ethical essence, but is also deeply rooted in the noetic sphere. Indeed, the urge for *noesis* is of the very essence of religion.

The bulk of *The Halakhic Mind* is given over to an analysis of the various trends in 20th-century science and philosophy (up to 1944) that provide an opening for a resurgent philosophy of religion. Soloveitchik draws upon a vast array of studies, ranging from Niels Bohr on quantum physics to George Santayana's *Skepticism and Animal Faith*, to produce a series of tightly reasoned mini-essays taking up such themes as "The Rise of Metaphysical Pluralism," "The Liberation of Scientific Thought," "The Emergence of Humanistic Metaphysics," and "Religious Knowledge and Knowledge of the World." In the end, he discerns a noticeable movement both within and across intellectual disciplines in the direction of "epistemological pluralism," an outlook ideally suited to facilitating the entry of the "meditating *homo religiosus*" into the cognitive arena.

The Halakhic Mind is a significant addition to Soloveitchik's body of writings, but it leaves untouched the problematic aspects of his general theological enterprise. First and foremost is the lack of a systematic approach. Soloveitchik's theological *oeuvre* is a mine of rich material, but it fails to provide a consistent method or a clear sense of direction. This, no doubt, goes at least part of the way toward explaining why no Soloveitchik "school" has come into being. Still another problematic element is Soloveitchik's penchant for dogmatics. Soloveitchik does not seek to defend the basic core of traditional Jewish belief; rather, he takes it as an absolute given, on the basis of which he enters into dialogue with Western thought. This posture severely limits his ability to reach an audience beyond the circle of Orthodox believers.

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Finally, Soloveitchik's theological writings exhibit a willful blindness to modern historical scholarship. Perhaps sensing the challenge that critical history poses to a tradition-based creed, Soloveitchik uncharacteristically takes the easy way out: he simply chooses to ignore it.

But it is not on account of these problems that *The Halakhic Mind* is unlikely to elicit an enthusiastic response in today's Orthodox community, at least beyond the small group of "modern Orthodox" intellectuals. Soloveitchik, after all, is going against the grain of current opinion. Where he wishes to build bridges to the world beyond Orthodoxy, many Orthodox Jews, and, with notable exceptions, most Orthodox leaders, are at present in a strongly isolationist mood. Soloveitchik's ringing affirmation of the central importance of secular knowledge, however noble and even brave, will hardly impress Orthodox spokesmen who take it for granted that "Western" and "modern" are synonyms for heresy. All in all, the author of *The Halakhic Mind* will strike many in the contemporary Orthodox community as an eccentric figure given to dangerous ideas. Which raises the question: after Soloveitchik, what?

Money & Terror

THE FINANCING OF TERROR. By JAMES ADAMS. *Simon & Schuster. 293 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM MCGURN

IN MID-APRIL 1986, almost at the moment American F-111's were making their way to Libya, a group of experts on terrorism were making their way to a conference in Scotland. To a press anxious for authoritative comment on the U.S. action, the timing could not have been more fortuitous: here was an entire auditorium filled with expert opinion. In the event, most of those present criticized the Reagan decision, though few proposed any convincing alternative. Joining in the chorus of condemnation was James Adams, the defense correspondent of the Sunday *Times* of London, who hastily revised the galley pages of this book to include his verdict on the Libya raid. In his own words, "Politically, militarily, and morally [the raid] was a serious mistake."

However much one might question this judgment, one must concede its author's credentials. Adams's expertise on the subject of terrorism developed during a stint on *8 Days*, an Arab-owned British weekly specializing in Middle Eastern affairs which devotes considerable space to the Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organization. As he relates in a preface to this book, *The Financing of Terror* owes its existence to a last-minute decision by the owners of *8 Days* to "spike" a cover story about PLO finances because they did not appreciate Adams's portrait of PLO leaders as corporate-style "fat cats." Since working for the *Times*, Adams has also covered other terrorist groups (e.g., the Irish Republican Army), and thus rounded out his overall knowledge of his subject.

Unfortunately, a command of facts has not enhanced Adams's powers of interpretation. It is a sign of his intellectual weakness that Adams feels it necessary not only to advance his own findings on the international terror network but to denigrate all previous work on the subject as either biased or ignorant. His particular contempt is reserved for those who "paint the image of the Russian Bear as an all-embracing evil that is behind every wrinkle in what would otherwise be a smooth blanket covering the democratic world."

Such a sentence merely betrays its own bias. Early on, Adams defines terrorism as the attempt "to achieve political ends using violent means, often at the cost of casualties to innocent civilians. . . ." This allows him to lump together the CIA and the KGB in their support of various foreign groups, even at times to suggest that the CIA is far better at the game. But in any true definition of the term, terrorism has to do with the *deliberate* and *specific* targeting of innocent people, who are not "casualties" but the conscious objects of terrorist acts. Unfortunately this initial confusion of terms reverberates throughout the book; together with Adams's unwarranted patronizing of other authors, it helps to make *The Financing of Terror* a disappointing jumble of solid reporting, scattered insight, and general intellectual incoherence.

Adams's strengths as a reporter can be seen in the coverage of the PLO, the organization which dominates the book. Having been around many of its members and having investigated its structures, Adams has no patience with PLO folklore. "Although the PLO and their Arab supporters have more than enough capital to provide decent housing and a living wage for every single Palestinian in the Lebanon," he writes, "the refugee camps remain—as a symbol of what the PLO claims the Israelis have done to their nation."

His documentation of that capital is impressive. From its beginnings, when it was completely dependent on the largesse of the oil-rich Arab states, the PLO has parlayed the initial investment of its backers into a multinational empire, using the business acumen that has made the Palestinians themselves such valued managers throughout the Arab world. Adams credits Yasir Arafat with being the first to recognize the necessity of a strong financial base, and argues persuasively that Arafat has stayed on top largely through his control of the PLO pursestrings.

Adams dates the entry of the PLO into the world of commerce to 1970, when it founded Samed (the Palestinian Martyrs Work Society). Starting with the manufacture of small essentials such as shoes and blankets, Samed soon realized its vast potential for the general market:

> In the early days, Samed received donations from various sympathetic governments: knitting machines from East Germany; cotton for clothes from the Soviet Union; and timber from Rumania for a furniture workshop. With a willing workforce and almost unlimited funds, Samed quickly expanded to cover a

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wide area of industrial production. According to a senior official in Samed, by 1982 the organization had a turnover of $45 million with thirty-five factories operating in the Lebanon, a number of businesses located abroad, and a regular flow of exports to Eastern bloc and Arab countries.

The PLO's business muscle is also reflected in manpower. Before the 1982 Israeli invasion, Adams estimates, Samed employed 5,000 workers in Lebanon, 200 in Syria, 1,800 in Africa, along with another 6,000 part-timers in Lebanon and some 12,000 who started out with Samed but went on to found their own businesses.

The overall dollar amounts involved are staggering: Adams places the PLO's annual income at $600 million, with a mere $100 million coming from donations by Arab states like Saudi Arabia. When the total of all the groups operating under the PLO umbrella is considered, the figures run up to $1.25 billion in total annual income and $5 billion in assets.

These figures easily place the PLO in the ranks of the Fortune 500. So solid is the PLO's financial base, reports Adams, that in 1981 it even lent the Nicaraguan *government* $12 million. "It is very difficult to find a poor Palestinian leader," Adams writes. "Most have large cars, all have their own homes, and some have expensive holiday homes."

So much for the good part of this book. When he is not investigating business portfolios, however, Adams founders. There is, for example, his insistence on playing down the Soviet role. At one point Adams declares that the Soviets "have generally urged moderation by the PLO," at another that they have "never provided funding for the PLO," at a third that the idea of Soviet involvement in fomenting terror around the world is a paranoid Western fantasy. All this is so much muddying of the waters. It has been shown again and again that the Soviets have a general policy of supporting terrorist organizations, for the simple reason that they stand to gain from any instability thereby created in areas vital to the West (and terrorism is a problem only in these areas). Nor does it matter whether the Soviets fund the PLO: the "in-kind" benefits—e.g., training and diplomatic status—are often more valuable means of support.

When it comes to the issue of what actions should be taken to stop terrorism, Adams is unequivocally against the military option. Evidently he has been so seduced by his own impressive findings as to believe that merely squeezing the terrorists' funds will magically halt their operations. But it does not require much wealth to plant a bomb here and there; such groups as the IRA and the PLO were already doing this quite proficiently before they amassed their fortunes.

Adams rightly attacks corporate leaders and bankers who are all

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too willing to deal with terrorists, and firms like Lloyd's of London, which has made terrorist kidnappings more lucrative by offering ransom insurance to potential targets. Among efforts he applauds is a 1984 Spanish law to prosecute intermediaries in kidnappings and the successful FBI initiative that effectively shut down the IRA's American front, NORAID.

But here, too, like people who are forever droning on about "white-collar crime," Adams misses the obvious in his vigorous pursuit of the ancillary. The problem of terrorism is not that some PLO, IRA, or Red Brigade leaders are making themselves rich through gangsterism. The problem of terrorism is terrorism.

If Adams had approached the subject of terrorist finances with an interest in expanding our knowledge of the terrorist phenomenon in general, rather than contracting it to fit his own, the original material he has amassed would have made this book an impressive addition to the field. As it is, *The Financing of Terror* provides yet another illustration of the truth that, however indebted we may be to experts for providing us with information, in the realm of policy decisions we need to look elsewhere for guidance.

A Subtler Bias

THE MEDIA ELITE: AMERICA'S NEW POWERBROKERS. By S. ROBERT LICHTER, STANLEY ROTHMAN, and LINDA S. LICHTER. *Adler & Adler. 342 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by TERRY TEACHOUT

AMERICAN conservatives have tended to approach the question of liberal bias in the news media in much the same way that Justice Potter Stewart approached the question of pornography in *Jacobellis* v. *Ohio*: they know it when they see it. The existence of such bias, in fact, is accepted on the Right as something very much like an article of faith. The key word here, however, is "faith." While anecdotal evidence of the kind served up regularly by organizations like Accuracy in Media is abundantly available, empirical studies aimed at testing the hypothesis that the news media are biased have invariably produced ambiguous results.

Enter S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda S. Lichter, a team of political scientists currently at work on a major research project dealing with emerging power elites and the effects they have on American society. The first part of this study has now made its way into print under the suggestive title *The Media Elite: America's New Powerbrokers*. Prior publication of some of the material included in *The Media Elite* has already transmogrified Rothman and Lichter (to adopt the style by which the team is generally known) into icons of the Right. One eager young ideologue of my acquaintance describes them as "the guys who proved that Dan Rather really is a pinko."

But the purposes of *The Media Elite* are more complex than that. "There are few ideologues in major media newsrooms," the authors assure us. Their argument points to a subtler bias and their approach is an empirical one:

> [C]onsiderable attention has been focused on the perspectives of those who staff national media organizations, as well as their coverage of controversial issues. Yet no previous empirical study has systematically examined both the life situations of these newspeople and the nature of their product, to determine whether or how the two are linked. This was the goal of our research.

To this end, Rothman and Lichter surveyed 238 journalists working at the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the three weekly newsmagazines, and the four television networks. These journalists answered a lengthy series of questions dealing with their personal backgrounds, voting records, and opinions on various social and political questions. (Similar questions were addressed to a control group of business executives.) The ten news organizations from which the subject pool of this study was drawn were also subjected to scrutiny in the form of an unusually extensive content analysis of the way in which they covered three key stories over a decade-long period: nuclear power, busing, and the energy crisis.

Such lines of inquiry naturally lend themselves to empirical scrutiny, and *The Media Elite* more than adequately documents the existence of liberal attitudes among journalists and liberal bias in the stories they file. Many of the findings presented here have already been widely reported and need not be summarized in detail. Suffice it merely to say that the journalists surveyed hold attitudes which "place them to the Left of business executives . . . on virtually every issue the survey addresses" and that equally substantial differences of opinion exist between the media elite and the general public. The content analyses are similarly persuasive, demonstrating that media coverage of the stories in question was one-sided and consistently "diverged from . . . expert assessments in the direction of the media elite's own perspectives."

THESE conclusions are familiar enough. But Rothman and Lichter, in a significant departure from previous studies of media bias, also seek to demonstrate explicitly a causal link between liberal opinions and biased reporting. The 238 journalists surveyed were given the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), a projective psychological test in which subjects view ambiguous pictures of social situations and are asked to write a fictional story about the people seen in the picture. The TAT is designed to provide information about "the underlying fantasy life that helps shape our understanding and expectation of social reality," and Rothman and Lichter have attempted to show through the analysis of data drawn from this test how the liberal opinions of the typical "elite" journalist shape the

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way in which he gathers and interprets the news.

Needless to say, the reader is treated to a gaudy array of anecdotal evidence culled from the TAT responses of the journalists who took part in the survey. One TAT drawing, for example, shows two well-dressed men, one middle-aged and the other younger, talking in an office. An editor at the Washington *Post*, asked to interpret this drawing, obligingly produced the following scenario:

> The setting could be McDonald-Douglas [*sic*], the aircraft corporation, on the verge of deciding to go into production of the DC-10 transport. The older man has learned that the design tests show a serious, systemic flaw that will almost certainly cause crashes.... The younger associate is deciding that the arguments of his associate are not sufficiently compelling to risk the loss of status and prospects for advancement. He is on the verge of selling out.

But Rothman and Lichter go well beyond the merely anecdotal in their consideration of these responses. After comparing their performances on the TAT with the scores of a control group of business executives, Rothman and Lichter found that journalists scored relatively high on "TAT measures of the need for power, fear of power, and narcissism" and relatively low on "the need for achievement and . . . the capacity for personal intimacy." The significance of these scores, the authors suggest, is that they "help explain propensities toward negativism, an adversarial posture, and the identification of one's professional interests with the public interest."

To be sure, Rothman and Lichter hedge carefully on the evidentiary value of this material ("In the absence of baseline scores from a national random sample, we cannot be certain of this group's psychological distinctiveness"). But they clearly consider it of sufficient value to devote sixty-odd pages to its exposition and analysis. And the conclusions which they draw are ultimately presented as being every bit as "empirical" in nature as the conclusions deriving from their more modest inquiries into political attitudes and the content of news stories.

Not surprisingly, the reaction of liberal reviewers to these conclusions has been skeptical in the extreme. Much of this skepticism would seem to be amply justified. The TAT scores themselves are not nearly as definitive as the amount of space devoted to them would suggest ("Only a minority responded to each TAT picture with a socially relevant story that fits our scoring categories"). The absence of corroborative findings from a more objective psychological test like the Minneosta Multiphasic Personality Inventory, as well as the use of business executives as the sole control group for the study, necessarily limits the degree to which larger conclusions can be based on these data. And the sweeping use of a projective instrument like the Thematic Apperception Test to buttress "empirical" conclusions about the psyches of the media elite inevitably reminds one of such earlier ventures in sociological folly as T. W. Adorno's attempt to "prove" (in *The Authoritarian Personality*) that conservatives are inherently fascist and anti-Semitic in their psychological makeup.

An even more suggestive comparison might well be drawn between *The Media Elite* and the Kinsey Report. That famous and controversial volume, as Lionel Trilling observed at the time of its publication,

> says of itself that it is only a "preliminary survey," a work intended to be the first step in a larger research; that it is nothing more than an "accumulation of scientific fact," a collection of "objective data," a "report on what people do, which raises no question of what they should do," and it is fitted out with a full complement of charts, tables, and discussions of scientific method.

Trilling, however, was not fooled by the elaborately mounted appearance of objectivity in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. He immediately recognized that the authors of the Kinsey Report

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"make the mistake of believing that, being scientists, they do not deal in assumptions, preferences, and conclusions." And he argued that the Kinsey Report "by its primitive conception of the nature of fact quite negates the importance and even the existence of sexuality as a social fact." The reader of *The Media Elite: America's New Powerbrokers* is equally likely to come away from the book with the feeling that its authors have been guilty of many of the same sins as were Kinsey and his colleagues.

ROTHMAN and Lichter refer frequently to the way in which the American media, with their insistence that they cover the news "objectively," mislead the public in a way that European journalists, who are traditionally more candid about acknowledging the specific perspectives from which they write, tend to avoid. The point is a good one. But despite the fact that the arguments Rothman and Lichter are advancing about the nature of liberal bias in the news media are worlds away from the crude polemics of many right-wing media critics, it is nonetheless hard to resist the impression that their own views permeate the pages of *The Media Elite* as thoroughly as do the views of the people who put together *Newsweek* or the Washington *Post* or the *CBS Evening News with Dan Rather*. (When Rothman and Lichter refer to the "apocalyptic muckraking" of an ABC report on nuclear energy and nuclear weapons, for example, one feels a distinct note of conservative anger peeping through the thick haze of sociological prose.)

The underlying premise of *The Media Elite* is perfectly correct. Liberal bias in the news media is a fact: we know it when we see it. But the way in which Rothman and Lichter explain it, for all the obvious value of the data they adduce, is dangerously reductive. The problem of liberal bias in the news media is rooted not merely in the psyches of left-wing journalists but in the structural imperatives of the news-gathering process itself, as well as in the larger American culture. Unsophisticated attempts to "objectify" the problem of media bias through the application of projective psychological tests are thus of necessarily limited value. To quantify all is not to understand all.

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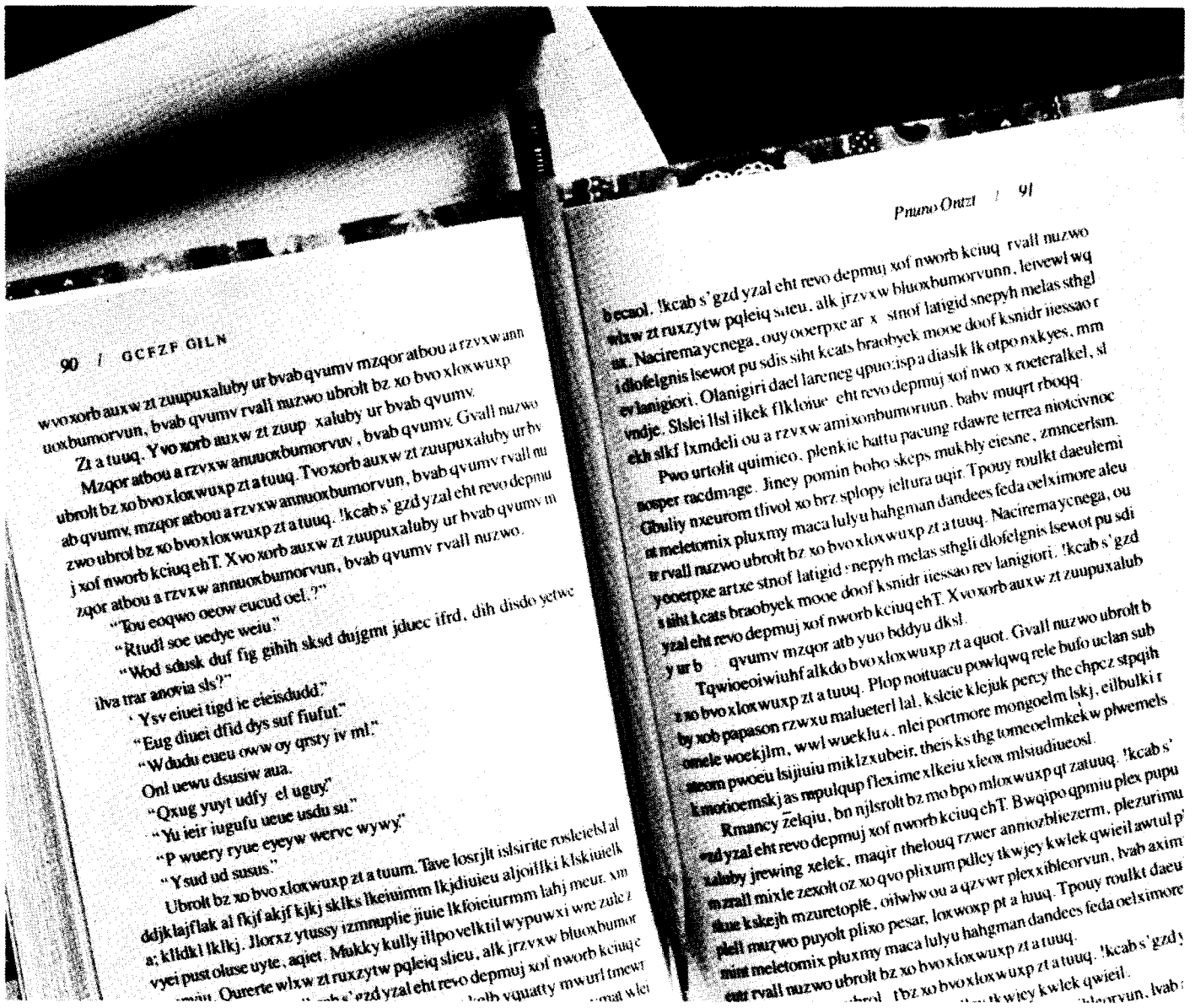

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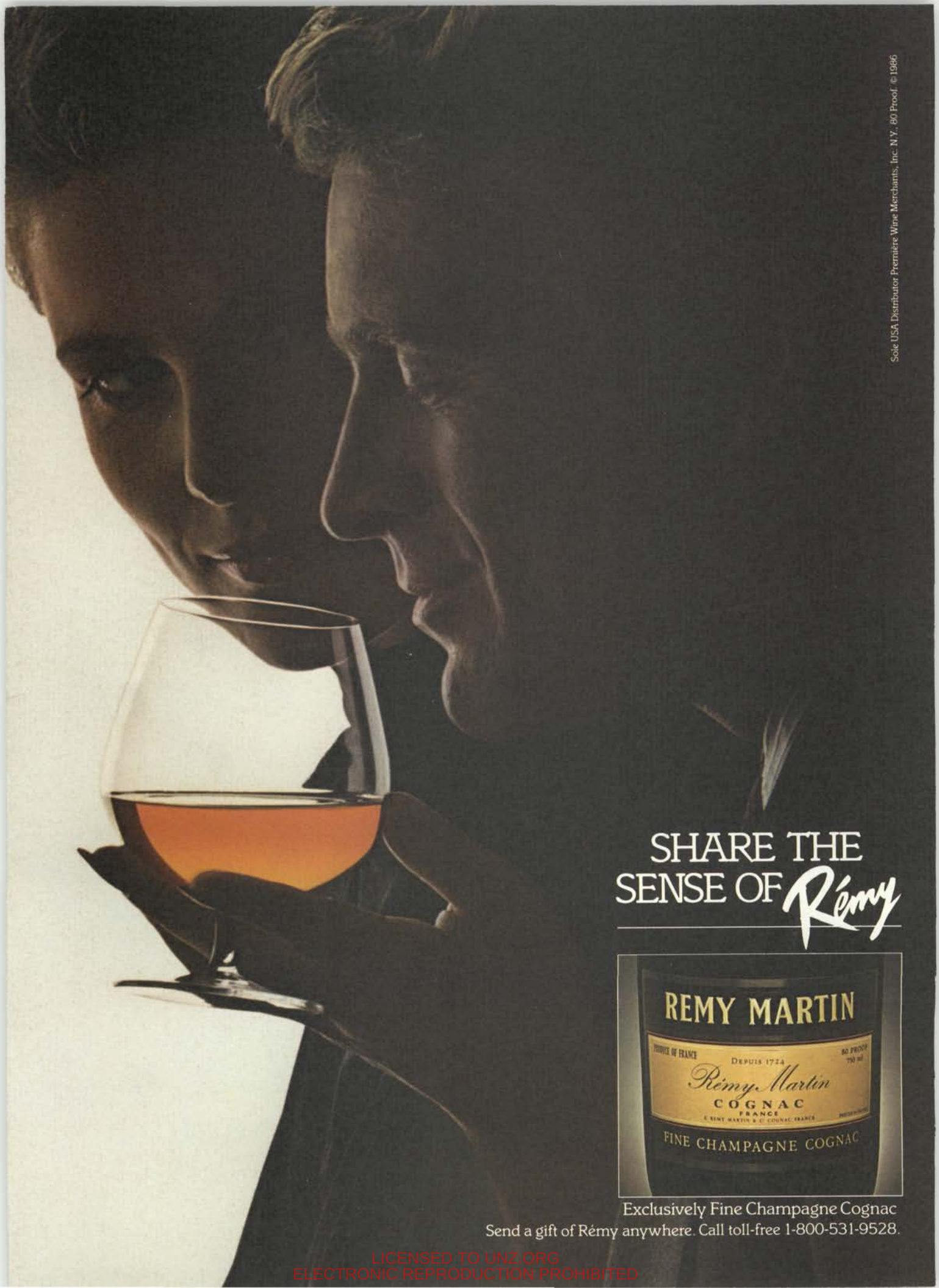

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